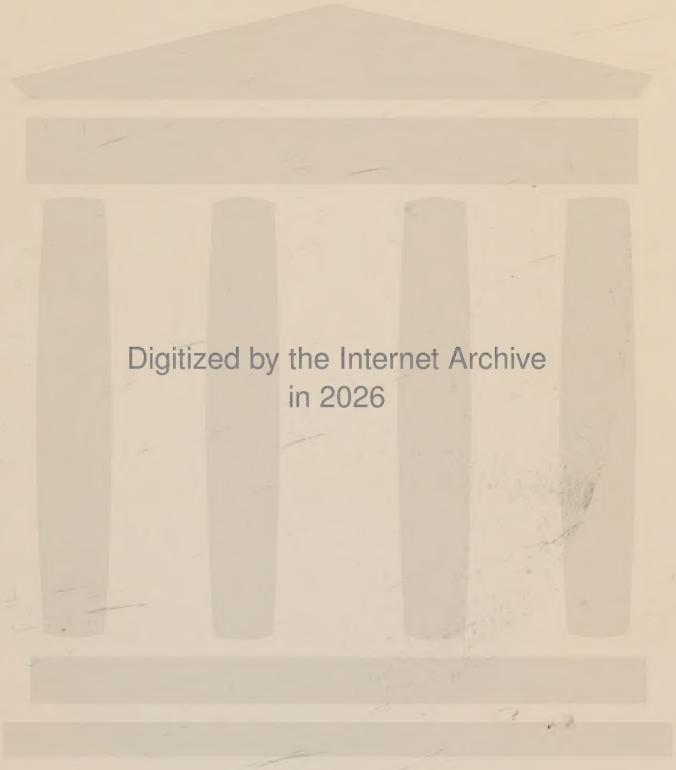
JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

A NEW STUDY IN CRITICISM

FREDERIKA MACDONALD

29Jul'41

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU



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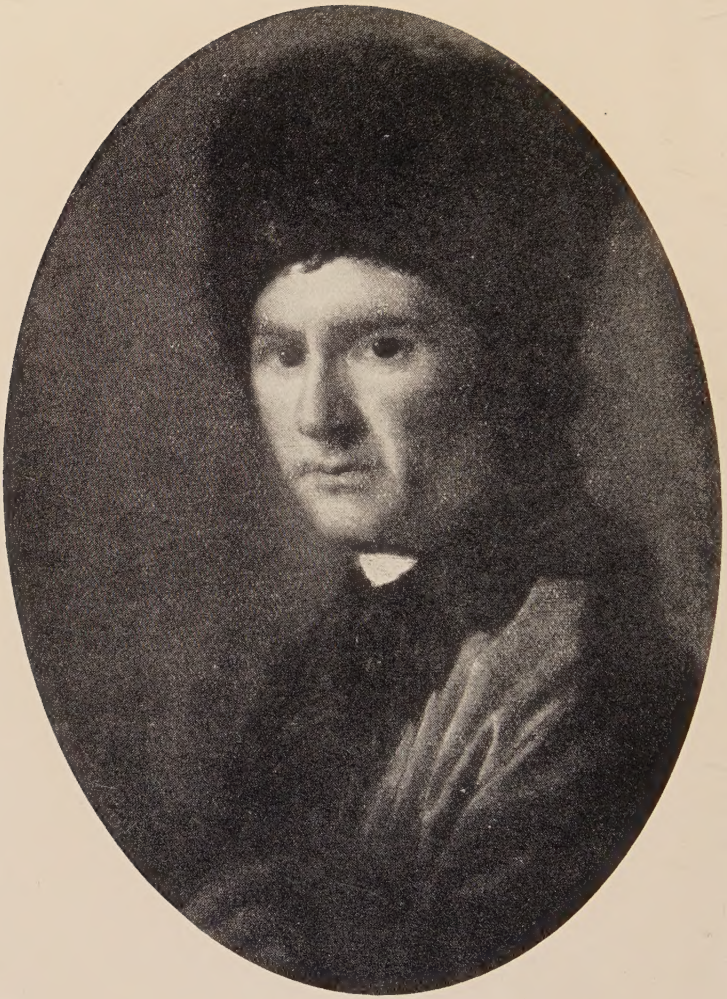

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU IN 1766, IN THE EPOCH OF HIS PERSECUTIONS
(From a picture painted by Ramsay.)

Rousseau said of this portrait: "That it represented him as a bear, by way of contrast to M. Hume's portrait, by the same artist, which lent him the face of a cherub." (See *Dialogues.*) [*Frontispiece.*

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

A NEW CRITICISM

BY

FREDERIKA MACDONALD,

AUTHOR OF
'ILIAD OF THE EAST,' 'THE FLOWER AND THE SPIRIT,'
'STUDIES IN THE FRANCE OF VOLTAIRE AND ROUSSEAU,' ETC.

'Qu'auront donc servi mon courage et mon zèle, si leurs monuments, loin d'être utiles aux bons, ne font qu'aigrir et fomenter l'animosité des méchants, si tout ce que l'amour de la vertu m'a fait dire sans crainte et sans intérêt ne fait à l'avenir, comme aujourd'hui, qu'exciter contre moi la prévention et la haine, et ne produit jamais aucun bien ; . . . .

. . . Non, le ciel ne laissera point un exemple aussi funeste ouvrir au crime une route nouvelle, inconnue jusqu'à ce jour ; il découvrira la noirceur d'une trame aussi cruelle. Un jour viendra, j'en ai la juste confiance, que les honnêtes gen béniront ma mémoire, et pleureront sur mon sort. Je suis sûr de la chose, quoique j'en ignore le temps. Voilà le fondement de ma patience et de mes consolations. L'ordre sera rétabli tôt ou tard, même sur la terre, je n'en doute pas. Mes oppresseurs peuvent reculer le moment de ma justification, mais ils ne sauroient empêcher qu'il ne vienne.'—J. J. Rousseau, *Third Dialogue.*

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JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

A NEW CRITICISM

PART IV—*Continued*

II. ROUSSEAU'S CRIMES AGAINST DIDEROT

CHAPTER VI

THE STORY OF THE ATROCIOUS LETTER TO SAINT-LAMBERT

Was Rousseau a calumniator when, in the preface to his *Lettre à d'Alembert*, he accused Diderot of having destroyed their friendship by "upbraidings and arrogance, by the betrayal of a secret, and by a treacherous blow?"

This eloquent Letter (Rousseau's criticism upon d'Alembert's article upon *Geneva* in the *Encyclopædia*) appeared in October 1758. Here is the passage in the preface that announced the author's rupture with Diderot to their mutual friends.

"Taste, choice and correctness of language must not be looked for in this work. Living alone, I have shown it to no one. I once possessed a severe and judicious Aristarchus: I have him no longer: and I do not wish for his help; but I shall always regret him. And my heart suffers even more from his loss than my writings do.

"Ad amicum etsi produxeris gladium non desperes,

est enim regressus ad amicum. Si aperueris os triste non timeas: est enim concordatio; excepto convitio et improperio et superbia; et mysterii revelatione, et plaga dolosa. In his omnibus effugiet amicus."

"If thou hast drawn a sword against a friend, despair not: for there may be a returning. If thou hast opened thy mouth against a friend, fear not: for there may be a reconciling. Except it be for upbraiding and arrogance; and disclosing a secret; and a treacherous blow. For these things, every friend will flee.—Ecclesiasticus xxii. 21, 22.[1]

Rousseau gives the text in Latin only: that is to say, the unlearned reader remained ignorant of the charge made. But it was intelligible to the circle where Diderot and he were known. Is he proved by this accusation made against his "old friend," to have been the aggressor in this quarrel?

Marmontel, La Harpe, and Diderot's defenders generally, maintain that he is—they admit that Diderot's retort may have been too violent; but they find his reply to the passage in the preface to the *Lettre à d'Alembert*, in 1758, in his attack upon Rousseau in the note added on to his Essay upon Seneca, in 1778!

"Rousseau was the aggressor, and violently the aggressor," says La Harpe. "His note inserted in the Letter on Theatres was a deadly injury.[2] Where then is the justice of describing Diderot's note as violent and delirious? Painted in the blackest colours in Rousseau's note, which preceded his own by twenty years, Diderot did nothing more than exercise his natural right when he gave back all the injurious titles he had received."

Without disputing this singular "natural right" claimed for Diderot by La Harpe, to abuse, after his death, the man whose charge of treachery he had left unanswered during his life-time, and for twenty years,

[1] The verses are wrongly given by Rousseau as 26, 27.

[2] Une injure sanglante.

let us examine whether the charge was false or true; for upon that issue must depend the question of whether Jean Jacques was the aggressor in the quarrel. If in October 1758 Diderot were guiltless of upbraidings and arrogance, of the betrayal of a secret, and of a treacherous blow, the passage in the preface to the *Lettre à d'Alembert* was an outrage. But if he had committed all these acts, then how can we praise enough Rousseau's moderation, dignity and gentleness when unmasking a secret enemy with expressions only of regret for the friend he believed in, and who had disappeared?

We find that in *January* 1757 Diderot had been guilty of upbraidings and arrogance towards Rousseau; and for no other reason than that at forty-four years of age he had presumed to order his life in accordance with his own tastes and requirements, by quitting Paris and establishing himself at Montmorency. *In October* 1757 we discover the same arrogance and upbraidings repeated by Diderot, in his renewed interference with Rousseau's management of his own concerns, and his insistence upon the necessity he discovered for Rousseau to accompany Madame d'Epinay to Geneva. *In April* 1758 we find it established by a letter from Madame d'Houdetot to Rousseau, that Diderot had betrayed the secret his friend Jean Jacques had confided to him, about his unhappy passion for this lady, to her lover Saint-Lambert; and that as a result of this "treacherous blow" Rousseau found himself exposed to Madame d'Houdetot's reproaches, and deprived of the only two friends in the circle of Madame d'Epinay's acquaintances who had remained constant to him.

Here then were facts, and not suspicions, that justified and rendered necessary Rousseau's denunciation of a secret enemy who, under the mask of friendship, worked stealthily to injure him. But independently of these facts made known to him, we shall find other and earlier facts, which Rousseau (supposed to have been afflicted with "the mania of suspicions") had remained entirely

blind to: facts which prove to us that, fully a year before Jean Jacques had begun to suspect the sincerity of Diderot, this "friend" whom he tenderly loved was working secretly with Grimm to create for him a false reputation.

When Rousseau left Paris in 1756 to establish himself at the Hermitage, it did not occur to him that the troublesome opposition of his "friends" meant more than their impatience at a man who looked at life in a way they did not understand. Here was his error. This act of his sealed the bond between Grimm and Diderot to destroy him.

Why? Since his name and fame had become a weariness to them, why should Diderot and Grimm have objected to his hiding himself in the country? Grimm's objection is easily discovered. He had only recently become the lover of the lady who had built Jean Jacques his Hermitage. Rousseau had introduced Grimm to Madame d'Epinay. He was not only a very old friend of hers, but he was a confidential friend, who knew all about the earlier *liaison* with de Francueil. In short, Jean Jacques knew too much, and Madame d'Epinay was much too fond of him, for Grimm's comfort. And, now, forsooth, he was to have his retreat at the very gates of La Chevrette; and the kind Madame d'Epinay, who "loved her friends very much and didn't mind taking any amount of trouble for them," was going to occupy herself with her favourite "Ours"—to make much of him; and caress and flatter him; and he was to be the centre of attraction in the circle; in other words, he was to take the position that belonged to Grimm as the lady's first favourite, although Jean Jacques might claim to be the older one? But no! Things were not to go on in this way! *Rousseau's retreat was not going to agree with him.* Solitude was going to tell upon his head; the woods were going to heat his imagination; he was going to become suspicious of his friends; he would be rude and

quarrelsome with Madame d'Epinay. He would take offence at trifles, and magnify playful jests into deliberate insults; *and the end would be that in a few months he would leave the Hermitage hopelessly embroiled with Madame d'Epinay, and at war with all his friends.*

So much for Grimm's motives, and the sources of his prophetic insight.

In Diderot's case, we have to count with the irritation always at work in his mind against Rousseau, ever since the epoch of what the author of the *Confessions* calls his "moral reformation": that is to say, his endeavour to live in accordance with his principles. And this irritation at the newly arrived philosopher, who chose to be so much more of a philosopher than the man who had made him (that was always the position taken up by Diderot) was fanned to hatred by the exasperation of constantly hearing Jean Jacques called the "virtuous." This was Diderot's assumed title by preference: although it is a little difficult to know upon what grounds he based his claim to it, and certainly no one but Grimm ever gave it him. It has been seen how Diderot's endeavour to compel Rousseau to leave off being virtuous in his own way, and to adopt Diderot's way, had launched the Encyclopædist, with Holbach and Grimm,[1] upon very questionable methods of secret interference and attempted coercion; described amongst themselves as a friendly conspiracy, "*une conspiration amicale*," inasmuch as the motive was to force an irrational man to give up his extravagant notions, and to recognize his own interests, and the interests of others dependent upon him. But Rousseau's final determination to leave Paris altogether and live in the country, put a stop to all these operations, carried on in concert with the Levasseurs. It proved, also, that the man's obstinacy was invincible. So that now again, these exasperated "old friends" ("friends of a very singular

[1] See vol. i. p. 32.

sort," as Ginguené said) would have to endure to listen to a chorus of public admiration of " the virtuous Jean Jacques," who, when the road to advancement lay open to him, hid himself from the praise of men, to lead a simple and retired life at Montmorency.

For Diderot, at any rate, this was the turning point. His enmity to Rousseau no longer took with himself even the disguise of any other sentiment. He pledged himself with Grimm to a conspiracy where the motive was no longer to make Rousseau false to his principles, but to treat him as a man without principles, in search of notoriety ; and especially to convince the public that when he made a show of independence and disinterestedness he was a crafty impostor.

We have now to establish the first act that associated Diderot with Grimm in this conspiracy.

On the 4th June, 1756, a letter from Voltaire to Thiriot announced that he was sending a new edition of his poem on Natural Law, including a new poem on the Earthquake of Lisbon (which had taken place November 1st, 1755).

" I am sending you," wrote Voltaire, " a new edition of my sermons, and I would beg you to distribute them amongst MM. d'Alembert, Diderot, and Rousseau. *They will understand me. They will see that I could not have expressed myself differently, and they will be edified by some of the notes. They will not denounce these sermons.*"

Thiriot, bound up with the Encyclopædists, of whom of course Diderot and d'Alembert were the chiefs, cannot have shown this letter, with the last phrase, to Rousseau. No doubt, Diderot was already exasperated that Jean Jacques should have been classed with the editors of the Encyclopædia. In any case, in the *Confessions*, Rousseau says that shortly after his establishment at the Hermitage he received Voltaire's poems, and he " supposed " that the author had sent them. Most certainly if Voltaire's observation about not denouncing

these sermons had been reported to him, he would not have undertaken to reply to the poem on the Earthquake of Lisbon. In the circumstances, Voltaire may, and no doubt did, think he had cause to complain of Rousseau's very eloquent letter in defence of optimism, attacked in the poem. Rousseau, on his side, ignorant of Voltaire's message, was hurt by the fact that his letter was left without reply: and the first grains of irritation were thus sown between these great leaders, who ought never to have quarrelled.

On the 1st July, Grimm sent round in his secret *Correspondance Littéraire* to the sovereigns, princes, and notable persons in the different courts of Europe who patronized his manuscript journal, a letter of Diderot's, dated 30th June, purporting to have been written to some impecunious man of letters who had left Paris recently, hidden himself in the country, abjured society, and who (so Diderot's reply gave it to be understood) had written to the philosopher, clamorously demanding pecuniary assistance: and asking (with the view of submitting some treatise to him) for an introduction to Voltaire. Here is this letter as it is in the *Correspondance Littéraire*, vol. i. p. 300–310.

LETTER OF DIDEROT TO M. L——.

"*30th June*, 1756.

"There are so many grievances in your letter, *mon cher*, that a big volume, such as I am obliged to write, would not suffice, were I to give to each complaint more than the four words of reply you ask for. If you are always in such pressing need of help, why wait for the last moment before claiming it? Your friends have enough delicacy and consideration to be beforehand with your wants; but wandering as you do, they never know where to find you. The first order sent you was not obtained as quickly as one wished, because they do not issue orders for such small sums: it was dated the 17th;

but was only sent to D—— on the 18th; I received it on the 19th. On the 20th there was no dispatch of letters; add to these delays, seven or eight days for the postage, and you have the twelve days of delay you reproach me with. *Let me suppose myself the sufferer if I can.* Why, during these three or four years that I got nothing but injuries and complaints from you in return for my attachment, am I not a sufferer? And am I not forced incessantly to put myself in your place, in order to forget these injuries: or only to see in them the natural effects of a temperament embittered by humiliations, and which has become ferocious.[1] *I did not reply to you, I did not send you the word of introduction to M. de V——*; the reason was that I had resolved to do what I could to help you, but not to write to you again. . . . I do not know V——; even had I known him, I should not have sent you an introduction. This man is dangerous, and you would have committed together imprudences, of which you alone would have been left to pay the cost. These were the reasons for my silence. *I care nothing*, so you say, *for the view you take of my proceedings?* It is true that I care a great deal more that my proceedings should be right. So long as I do not reproach myself, I shall not care much for your reproaches. The important point, my friend, is that the injustice should not be on *my* side. I pass over the six or seven lines that follow, because they have not common-sense. If a man has a hundred good reasons, he may have one that is bad. You fasten on that one always, and forget the others. But let us come now to the business of your manuscript. It is a work capable of ruining me: and after having twice overwhelmed me with deliberate and atrocious outrages, when you calmly propose to me to undertake its revision and production, you know very well that I have a wife and child; that I have been charged already, and that you might easily expose me, as a marked man, to fresh trouble. Never mind; you take

[1] The familiar description of the mythical Jean Jacques.

none of these things into consideration, or you neglect them; you take me for an imbecile, or you are one yourself; but you are not an imbecile. One should never ask another to do for one what one would not do for him; or else one should prepare one's self to be suspected of craft and injustice. I see the designs of men very often, without deigning to let them see that I am less stupid than they suppose. It suffices if I see that what has a great utility for them, has only a small inconvenience for me. I am not always a fool, every time I am taken for one!

"In the eyes of the people, your moral is detestable. In the eyes of the philosopher it is small and narrow, half false, half true, etc."

Here Diderot goes on to use the refutation of the doctrine attributed to his correspondent, as an opportunity for exposing his own creed, and that of his sect, viz., "*that there are, correctly speaking, no causes but physical causes; that consequently there is no freedom of action, and that virtue and vice are words void of meaning.*" (All this is very important, and, as it happens, in this false Letter, in Voltaire's poem upon the Earthquake of Lisbon, and in Rousseau's reply to it, we have succinctly stated the three heterodox forms of attack directed against the old Faith. But these ideas belong to the inquiry that will occupy us later on, into the true significance of Rousseau's teachings and spiritual influences. We have here to deal with the conspiracy to make him pass for an impostor.)

"Adopt these principles, if you find them good," Diderot continues, "or else, show me where they are false. If you adopt them they will reconcile you with others and with yourself—you will be neither angry nor pleased with yourself for being what you are. *Never to reproach others with their actions, never to repent of one's own, here is the first step towards wisdom.*[1] All that lies beyond

[1] In this act we find Diderot doing what most men would have repented of; as a matter of fact he did not repent, but took himself indulgently as an unscrupulous hater.

this is prejudice, and false philosophy. If one grows impatient, swears, kicks against the pricks, the reason is that in the best constituted man, the most happily modified, there remains a good deal of the animal. Before being a misanthrope, see if you have the right to be one. I know what your apology will be: there is a difference between separating one's self from the human race, and hating it. But can you tell me if among men, any one of them has done you a hundredth part of the harm you have done yourself? Is it the malice of men that renders you melancholy, restless, sad, quarrelsome, vagabond, sickly? Forgive me this question, we are reasoning together: and you know what I think. If the wicked are more enterprising with you than with others on account of your weakness and helplessness, that is the general law of nature; you must, if you please, submit to it, for there might be a lot of difficulty in altering it. And then, would one not really say that the whole of nature conspires against *you?* That luck has gathered all the misfortunes in the world to pour them on *your* head? Where the devil have you found the vanity to think this? *Mon cher*, you think too much of yourself; you attribute too much importance to yourself in the universe! Except one or two persons who love you, who pity you, and who excuse you, everything is quiet around you—sleep tranquilly on that. With your five hundred crowns, where you are and what you are, you are better off than I, with my two thousand five hundred crowns, where I am and what I am. Your lamentations exasperate D——.[1] And it is true that if all those who are worse off than you made such a din, the world would become uninhabitable. What on earth do you mean with all this hullabaloo *about the want of pity for you, the bad things said and done against you; about your ruin that is wanted, the pits dug for you, the precipices towards which you are led?* Oh, in God's name, man,

[1] Duclos is meant, for in the Arsenal MS. we find Desbarres.

leave off these eternal accusations and jeremiads, and return again to live amongst the men you complain of, to see them as they are; and stop this torrent of invectives and of bitterness which you have kept flowing for four years. You said: 'I have not enough': and D—— gave more. I add very little, but you can count upon it as long as I live. . . .' Once again, you said: 'but all I have may be lost to me,' and D—— then made your future secure. Now then, what is again the matter? One should be exact in these cases. Why do you go on begging favours that, to say the least, are unreasonable? To judge of D——'s position by my own, I am able in three months to give away, say twenty-five francs, but not fifty; every one has to regulate these things. You are indignant at D——'s tone towards you—but by this time, you should know his character and tricks of speech. The same word that signifies nothing in the mouth of a rough, good-natured man, might be an outrage in the mouth of another man who weighs every syllable he utters. You pride yourself upon knowing men, and you still show yourself ignorant of the fact that every man's language must be interpreted by his character. If ill-luck threw you into any strait, does our conduct allow you to think that we would leave you there? You ask from D——, then, what no one refuses to any one, and you show distrust of your friends. Oh, *mort Dieu!* go straight ahead and show some faith in the people who have never failed you. I wanted to follow you to the end, but I have not time; and thanks to your own letter, which is interminable, I might be condemned to an eternal argument. But what a number of injuries, suspicions, phrases maliciously and ridiculously thrown in, should I not still have to answer if I took the whole letter. But I shall make you blush for all these follies, if ever you recover from your delirium. *You wish you owed me nothing. I am to some extent the cause of the bad situation you are in. I wish to ruin you.* What does all this mean?

For God's sake, make an end of all these nauseous phrases; and do try to realize that one gets sick of invectives. Really, I cannot understand how you dare to complain of D——'s tone towards you, and to use one so entirely unsuitable with me.

"I will do what you ask me in your letter. Adieu, keep in good health, and found your opinion of your friends on the testimony of your conscience. It is not that, it is your false judgment, which accuses them. Farewell, once again. On Saint Peter's Day.

(Signed) "DIDEROT."

LETTER FROM M. GRIMM TO M. DIDEROT, 30 JUNE.

"I send you back the little masterpiece, my Diderot! I kept it a day longer than I should have done. I beg the pardon of this pitiless Landois, who pardons nothing; but I would not let any one else copy it; and it has taken me all this time to do it myself. *The princes will be enchanted with the present you allow me to make them.* For the whole universe, I would not have left out the energetic interjections you advise me to suppress. Placed as they are, they add to the grace and force of the diction, two things not to be interfered with. I shall be in the Faubourg one of these days to see off M. de Castries; and I shall not return without having seen you face to face. I have never had any other philosophy than yours, and I glory in it. You are my master; you render an account of what I think and you confirm me in it. One must love men then: if only because they are bipeds as you are."

Two facts stand out with equal clearness to an attentive and well-informed critic who studies this letter. The first is—that it was never sent to Rousseau. The second fact is—that it was intended Grimm's *abonnés* should believe it was addressed to Rousseau. In other words, it was intended that the foreign sovereigns, princes

and statesmen and leaders of Society who patronized this secret journal should receive the impression that the famous man of letters whose disinterestedness, independence, and taste for simplicity and a retired life led him to hide himself in the country, was in reality "melancholy, restless, sad, quarrelsome and full of lamentations" in his retreat; and that far from living independently on the money he earned as a copyist, he pestered his patrons and his friends to increase the allowances they made him!

Although this detestable and malicious imposture is unmistakably revealed to every student of the language habitually used about Rousseau by Diderot and Grimm, confirmation of the certainty of this first deliberate act of treachery by Diderot, is found in the Arsenal Manuscript.[1] In the 159 cahier we have this letter exactly as it stands in the *Correspondance Littéraire;* the only difference being that where D—— stands in the *Correspondance* we have *Desbarres* in the *Memoirs:* proving that Duclos was the person intended. Now Duclos, known to have arranged for Rousseau the business terms for his opera, the *Devin du Village*, was a patron who might be given him with some appearance of probability.

We are now well qualified, where Rousseau was not, to appreciate Diderot's true sentiments and motives when, seven months later, we find the author of the "little masterpiece" Grimm had sent round to his *abonnés* in July, seizing the opportunity to insert some of the same phrases in his real letters to Jean Jacques, who, entirely bewildered, remarks that if Diderot had been seeking to make a quarrel he could hardly have followed any other plan. The probabilities are that Diderot did intend to stir up a quarrel: that the secret between himself and Grimm, in connection with the sham letter circulated in the *Correspondance Littéraire*, tormented him a good deal more than it did Grimm; and that his wish was to assume with Jean Jacques very much the same bullying

[1] See Note, Appendix F, vol. ii.

and contemptuous tone that characterized his letter to his imaginary protégé. In this connection we may notice, too, that the probable explanation of the disappearance from Rousseau's papers of the letters written him during the first year of his residence at the Hermitage is that Diderot, through Madame Levasseur and Thérèse, secured their destruction after Rousseau's flight from Montmorency, in the interval when Thérèse remained behind at Mont Louis. Diderot would naturally desire that his real letters, which would have discredited the "little masterpiece," should never be reproduced: and Rousseau's celebrity in this epoch made the publication of his *Correspondence* almost inevitable.

In January 1757 appeared Diderot's play, *Le Fils Naturel*. He sent a copy to Rousseau, who read it "with the interest," he says, "one gives to the work done by a friend." In Scene III of the 4th Act, however, he came across a passage which made a most painful impression upon him. He did not arrive at the conclusion that he was deliberately attacked in it; but he saw that the phrase would be held to apply to his case; and it grieved him that Diderot should not have felt this: or, feeling it, should not have so modified the sentence as to avoid the application. Here is the passage—it occurs in a speech by the heroine, Constance, and is an argument against her rejected suitor, Dorval, who announces his intention of giving up life in the world, and retiring into the country.

Constance. "Dorval, you deceive yourself. To gain tranquillity you must have the approbation of your own heart and perhaps of men. You will not obtain the first if you quit the post that is marked out for you. You have received the rarest talents: you owe an account of them to Society. Let this crowd of useless beings which move in it without object and fill up the way without being of any use, withdraw from it, if they please; but you cannot, I dare to say it, withdraw, without committing a crime. It is for the woman who loves you to

attach you to the service of your fellow-men. It is for Constance to keep to oppressed virtue her supporter, to arrogant vice its scourge, to good men a brother, to the unhappy a father, to mankind a friend, to a thousand useful projects this mind free from prejudice and this strong soul, which their success requires, and which you possess. You—renounce Society? I appeal from your words back to your heart; it will tell you that the good man lives in society, and only the wicked man is alone."

In these phrases, Rousseau heard the echo of old reproaches, against which he had not deemed it necessary to defend himself: because (and here is a point that needs to be insisted upon) the extravagance of them as applied to himself was apparent. Rousseau had not vowed himself to solitude as an ascetic, or as a misanthrope; but simply as a thinker and worker, who prefers country to city life. To begin with, this hermit was married. His retreat was shared with his life-companion Thérèse, whom he had taken "for better for worse until death should part them," eleven years before. He had, to mitigate his solitude not only a wife, but a mother-in-law; an old lady of sociable temper, who did not delay forming both friendly and hostle relationships with peasants in the neighbourhood. His Hermitage was only twelve miles from Paris; and if his friends found it too far to visit him, he had only too many visitors of another sort, people with carriages, and time to lose, who thought themselves justified, as admirers of a famous man, in pursuing him to the retreat he had sought, chiefly to escape from such interruptions. Then, Madame d'Epinay's château was only at an hour's distance, and she spent her summer always there; and was ready to pay other visits to see how her "bear" was getting on. So, then, if solitude and the silence of woods are perilous things to a mind occupied with the toil and travail of giving noble utterance to great thoughts, Rousseau, who avowedly loved these things, did not get enough of them to breed wickedness in him.

But does not the very fact that the reproaches did not apply, prove that they were not meant for him? Or if even they were meant for him, would it not have been wiser to ignore them, for the same reason that he had let the old arguments drop? No doubt it would have been wiser; but then, as has been said, he did not understand the position. He did not feel himself attacked by a secret enemy—but indirectly appealed to, in a way he could not mistake. He saw no malice in this: no trap laid for him. He saw it always as the mistaken and unjust insistence of a friend, who believed him at fault: and who desired, at any cost, by any means, to force him to do what this positive and bigoted well-wisher had settled for him he ought to do.

Rousseau, then, was exasperated and hurt; and he cried out against his friend. He suspected no "treacherous blow." Here is his own statement:—

"I loved Diderot tenderly: I esteemed him sincerely: and I counted with entire confidence on his affection and esteem for me. But irritated by his indefatigable obstinacy in eternally contradicting me about my tastes, my inclinations, my manner of living, and everything that was exclusively my own concern, revolted to see a man younger than myself[1] desiring to rule me as though I had been a child, annoyed by his readiness to promise and his negligence to keep his promises, tired of the numberless meetings given and not kept by him, and given again always with the same results, sick of expecting him in vain three or four times a month, on days appointed by himself, and of dining alone after all—after going all the way to Saint-Denis to meet him, and waiting there half the day, I had my heart full of all these divers wrongs. This last appeared to me gravest of all and hurt me most. I wrote to him to complain of it, but with a gentleness and tenderness which made me moisten the paper with my tears: and my letter was touching enough to have drawn tears from him.

[1] Diderot was a year younger than Jean Jacques.

His reply one would never have imagined possible: here it is, word for word."

Before giving this reply, let it be pointed out that if Diderot had no intention of any application of his sentence to Rousseau's case, he would naturally have said so. Here is the plain answer to critics who, like M. Maurice Tourneux, think that Rousseau went out of his way to imagine an offensive intention in the words placed in the mouth of an imaginary personage. Very far from suggesting that Jean Jacques was mistaken in discovering any connection between the opinion expressed by Constance, and his own opinion, we find Diderot adopting as his conviction the sentence that "the good man is in society and only the wicked man alone."

"You are not of my opinion about hermits? Say as much good of them as you please, you are the only one in the world of whom I shall ever think any; and even so, a good deal might be said about it, if one could speak without making you angry. A woman of eighty years of age! I have heard of a passage in a letter from Madame d'Epinay's son that must have given you much pain, unless I wrongly read your true heart. I salute and embrace you. Farewell, 'Citizen'—but, admit it: a hermit is a queer sort of citizen!"

Rousseau's reply to this we do not possess; unluckily, off his guard, and not realizing that these letters could ever come to be the decisive proofs of his position as the victim, and not the aggressor, in this quarrel, he kept no copies. Diderot's letters, however, speak for themselves: they even assist us in re-constructing the leading arguments Rousseau must have employed; for we find him following the intensely irritating habit of reproducing phrases from the letter received. By this means we learn that Rousseau said he "would not go to Paris," that "his book had better be returned to him," that he declined an offer of some work Diderot offered him, that

"Scipio, amongst others, served his country, yet loved a country life."

"It is true that for fifteen years I have had a wife, child, servants, no fortune," wrote Diderot, "and that my life is so full of worries and trouble that often I lose the hours of happiness and release I promise myself. My enemies on the strength of it, as the spirit moves them, either laugh at me or abuse me. But in spite of this, what have I to complain of? *'I will not go to Paris, I shall not go again, and upon this I am resolved;'* it is not absolutely impossible that this is a reasonable speech! You do not know what was the proposal I had to make to you, and you refuse it, and thank me! My friend, I never yet proposed to you anything dishonourable, and I have not changed from what I was. It is now more than a fortnight since I was to speak to you about your work; we were to have conferred together, we should do so: and you will not come to Paris! Well, on Saturday morning, never mind what weather it may be, I shall start for the Hermitage. I shall go on foot, inasmuch as my fortune does not allow me to go in any other way; *and it is only right that I should take my revenge upon you for all the* faults *you have had with me for four years.*[1] However much pain my letter may have given you, I do not repent of having written it. You are too well-pleased with your reply. You shall not, at any rate, reproach heaven for not having given you friends. May heaven forgive you their uselessness. I am still afraid of the danger to Madame Levasseur; and I shall not get over it until I have seen her. I may tell you, in secret, that the reading to her of your letter may have been a very inhuman sophistry. But at present she owes her living to you, so I hold my tongue. The scholar[2]

[1] See sham letter, p. 8. The term of "four years" dates from the Devin du Village and Rousseau's refusal of the pension then offered him, 1752.

[2] "Le Lettré," Madame d'Epinay's son, a child of nine.

has probably written to tell you that there were on the ramparts twenty poor people dying of cold and hunger, and who waited for the pence you used to give them. That is a specimen of our gossip, and if you heard the rest it would amuse you as much. It is 'better to be dead than a knave,' but woe betide the man who has no duties of which he is the slave. Scipio had for his friends all the greatest people in the Republic, and I don't doubt that the road between Rome and Linterne, and between Linterne and Rome, was often blocked with litters. But the most opulent of your friends can't afford the fare of a carriage without inconvenience, and that is why one will only find on the road between the Hermitage and La Chevrette some pedestrian philosophers, stick in hand, wet to the bone and mud-stained to the waist. Nevertheless, in whatever corner of the world you hide yourself from them, their friendship will follow you and *the interest they take in Madame Levasseur* (!) *Live, my friend, live, and don't fear* that *she shall die of hunger.*[1] Whatever success my book may have had, whatever you may say of it, I have only got worry from it, and only expect vexation—farewell until Saturday."

Rousseau did not reply directly to this letter, and his conduct proves the reason. He was so outraged that he feared to give his temper rein. He wrote to Madame d'Epinay,[2] and was persuaded by her to wait and let his temper cool. Meanwhile, at his request she contrived that Diderot's promised, or threatened, visit on the Saturday following should be put off. Upon this he received another rebuke from the Encyclopædist.

[1] See sham letter. "*Mort Dieu!* go straight ahead, and show faith in those who have never failed you"—p. 11.

[2] See vol. i. p. 228.

DIDEROT'S LETTER.—(*From original autograph, see Streckeisen-Moultou,* vol. i. p. 276.)

"Madame d'Epinay sent me word on Friday by her son, that you would come here on Saturday, and consequently that it was useless for me to go to the Hermitage. It would have been so right of you to come, and I was so convinced you would arrive, that I waited for you the whole day. It is not difficult to guess from what reasons a truthful and kind-hearted woman made up her mind to tell this little falsehood. I understand it all: you would have overwhelmed me with abuse, or you would have shut your door in my face, and she wished to save us both from a scene that would have afflicted me, and given you cause of shame. My friend, believe me, don't take injustice in as the companion of your retreat; she is a bad helpmate. Once and for all, ask yourself: Who has thought of my health, when I was ill? Who has taken my part, when I was attacked? Who has shown a lively interest in my fame? Who has rejoiced at my success? Answer yourself sincerely, and recognize those who really love you. If you have said anything to Madame d'Epinay unworthy of me, so much the worse for you; people see and hear me, and can compare my conduct with what you say. I send you back your manuscript because I have been sufficiently made to understand that if I took it to you, I should expose you to the risk of ill-treating your friend. Oh, Rousseau, you are becoming wicked, unjust, cruel, ferocious, and I weep over it for grief."[1]

ROUSSEAU'S REPLY TO DIDEROT. *See Correspondence.*

"I wish to sum up in as few words as possible the history of our quarrel. You sent me your book. I

[1] See sham letter, p. 8. "Am I not forced to put myself incessantly in your place to see in these injuries the natural effects of a temperament embittered by humiliations that has become ferocious?"

wrote you after this the most tender and courteous note I ever wrote in my life, and in which I complained with all the affectionateness of friendship of a very doubtful maxim, which people might easily turn against me in a most offensive manner. I received from you in reply a chilly and dry answer, where you appeared as a favour to consent not to esteem me a dishonest man—and that solely because I have living with me a woman of eighty years of age; as if country air were mortal to people at that age; and as if there were no women of eighty outside of Paris. My reply had all the vivacity of an honest man insulted by his friend. You answered by an abominable letter. I defended myself—and very vigorously. But, distrusting myself in the furious indignation you had thrown me into, and afraid in this state to put myself in the wrong with a friend, I sent my letter to Madame d'Epinay, making her a judge of the difference between us. She sent me back my letter, imploring me to suppress it. I did suppress it. You now write me another letter in which you call me wicked, unjust, cruel and ferocious. Here is the summary of what has passed. I wish to ask you three or four very simple questions. Who has been the aggressor in this affair? If you will submit the matter to a third party, show my first note; and I will show yours. Even supposing that I received your reproaches badly, and that I was in the wrong here, which of us two should have first tried to make amends and to bring about a reconciliation? I have never resisted gentle words. You may not know this: but you do know that I do not yield to outrages. *If your design had been in this business to pick a quarrel with me what other plan could you have followed?* You complain much of the wrongs I have done you—what are these wrongs? Are they perhaps not to endure so patiently as you would like those it pleases you to inflict upon me?—not to let myself be tyrannized over?—to complain when you constantly break your word with me, and never come

when you have promised to do so? If ever I have done you any other wrongs—say what they are? I, hurt my friends! However cruel, wicked, ferocious I may be, I should die of grief if I thought I had inflicted upon my most cruel enemy the pain you have made me suffer in these six weeks. You speak to me of your services—I have not forgotten them; but do not make any mistake; many people have rendered me services who were not my friends. A worthy man, who has no real affection, renders one a service, and believes that constitutes him a friend; he deceives himself—he is only a worthy man. All your eagerness and zeal to obtain for me what I don't want touches me very little. I only need your friendship, and that you refuse me. Ungrateful one! I have not rendered you services: but I have loved you: and you will never pay me back what I felt for you during three months. Show this to your wife—more just than you are; and ask her whether when my presence was consolatory to your suffering heart, I counted my steps; or attended to what weather it was when I went to Vincennes to see my friend. Insensible and hard-hearted man! two tears of thine would be more precious to me now than a king's throne; but thou refusest me these tears of regret, whilst exciting mine. Well then, keep all the rest, I need nothing from thee! It is true I asked Madame d'Epinay to prevent you from coming last Saturday. We were in a state of mind, both of us, when, had we met, it might have been for the last time."

Diderot does not seem to have replied by letter. But there is a letter from Deleyre, dated 31st March, which shows that a temporary peace was made.

"I saw M. Diderot yesterday, my dear Citizen," writes Deleyre, "and you would have seen him on Sunday, only he had not had a lesson on Saturday at M. Bonelle's. You will soon be of one mind again: your last letter has soothed him. Urge him to tell you all he has on his heart; it is only by

complete confidence that your friendship will recover security."

Apparently after a visit from Diderot, Rousseau, forgetting all grievances, imagined that this security was re-established. The episode of his romantic *liaison* with Madame d'Houdetot, and of the first quarrel with Madame d'Epinay, about the mischief made with Saint-Lambert in June 1757, fills in the interval between this reconciliation and Rousseau's next meeting with Diderot. It took place in late July; and the date can be approximately fixed, because it took place during Saint-Lambert's visit to Montmorency, after the battle of Hastenbeck, 26th July.

Rousseau relates in the *Confessions* that his resolution not to go to Paris was overthrown by the news that reached him through Deleyre of Diderot's distressed state of mind, as a result of the attack made upon his play, *Le Fils Naturel*, which he was accused of having borrowed from Goldoni. All the enemies of the Encyclopædia seized the opportunity to make as much as possible of these reports that the editor was a plagiarist.

"Diderot, even more sensitive under criticism than Voltaire," writes Rousseau,[1] "was very much cast down. Madame de Graffigny had had the malice to spread the report that I had broken with him on account of these rumours. I thought it both just and generous to publicly prove the contrary, and I therefore went up to pass two days, not only with him but at his house. Since my establishment at the Hermitage this was my second visit to Paris. My first was made to run to the bedside of the poor Gauffecourt, who had an attack of apoplexy from which he has never entirely recovered. Diderot received me well. How the embrace of a friend can efface remembrance of his faults! He read me his *Père de Famille*, 'Here,' I said, 'will be the best defence of the *Fils Naturel*. Work at this piece with zeal; and throw it in

[1] *Confessions*, part ii., liv. ix.

the teeth of your enemies as your best reply to them.' He acted in this way: and found it successful. Nearly six months before I had sent him the first two books of the *Julie*, for his opinion of them. He had not yet read them. We read one book together. The second day after my arrival, he wished very much to take me to supper at the Baron d'Holbach's. Nothing was less to my mind: I wished even to break off the arrangement about the manuscript on chemistry, as it made me angry to be under any obligation to this man. Diderot, however, got his own way. He assured me that M. d'Holbach was sincerely attached to me: that one had to forgive the peculiar tone that he took with nearly every one, and that his friends suffered from even more than strangers. Whilst I was in Paris, Saint-Lambert returned from the army. As I did not know about it, I only saw him after my return to the country, where I saw him first at La Chevrette, and afterwards at the Hermitage: where he invited himself, and Madame d'Houdetot, to dine with me. It may easily be understood with what pleasure I received them."

An autograph letter from Deleyre entirely supports all these statements about the motives of Rousseau's visit to Diderot. The letter gives the malicious report circulated by Madame de Graffigny; and suggests that Rousseau's visit would not only console Diderot, but prove the falseness of this spiteful report. One other detail of Deleyre's letter has to be remarked. *He says that Diderot is a widower for the time being: Madame Diderot being in the country.* Here is a fact that gains importance when we find that this visit, the only one Rousseau paid to Diderot in Paris during his stay at the Hermitage, is made the occasion when the "wife of Garnier," the good simple soul, who has so much "instinctive penetration," comments upon René's "devouring envy," which renders him furious if any merit is found in other people.

The Arsenal note where this story is sketched is the

one reproduced (vol. i. p. 92, 93) as the longest and most important of the notes written by Diderot. The page in the manuscript where an entirely different account of the purpose of Rousseau's visit is given, upon the authority of Diderot's own story written to Grimm, is in the 141st cahier of the Archives manuscript:[1] and, of course, represents a re-written chapter, in the hand which corrects and re-writes the original narrative.

Volx is writing to Madame de Montbrillant.[1]

"So, then, René told you he did not take his book to Paris? He lied: for he only took the journey for that purpose. I received yesterday a letter from Garnier which paints your hermit for me as though I saw him. He did these two leagues on foot and came to establish himself at Garnier's, without giving him any notice of his arrival: and all to make him revise his book. On the terms they are, you will admit that is strange conduct. *I see by certain words my friend lets fall that another matter was discussed between them*, but as he does not explain himself I do not understand the subject. René kept him pitilessly at work from ten o'clock on Saturday morning until eleven o'clock on Monday night, scarcely allowing him the time to eat or drink. The revision finished, Garnier began to speak to him about a plan he had in his head; and begged René to help him arrange an incident which he had not yet planned in the way that pleased him. 'That is too difficult,' coldly replied the hermit; 'it is late: and I am not accustomed to sit up. Good-night: I am leaving to-morrow at six in the morning—it is time to sleep.' He rose, went to bed: and left Garnier petrified by this proceeding. Here you have this man whom you thought penetrated by your lessons! *Add to this reflection a singular observation of Garnier's wife, which I beg you to profit by. This woman is a simple soul, but her tact is right. Seeing her husband*

[1] See also printed *Memoirs*, vol. iii. pp. 60–62; and facsimile 5, vol. i. pp. 86, 87.

upset on the day of René's departure, she asked him the reason: he told her. 'It is the want of delicacy in this man,' he said, 'which distresses me. He makes me work like a slave: I believe I should hardly have noticed that, though, if he had not refused so dryly to occupy himself with me for a quarter of an hour.'— 'You are astonished at that?' replied his wife. 'You do not then know him? He is devoured with envy. He is furious when anything fine appears which is not by him. Some fine day you will find him commit some great crime in order not to be ignored. See now, I wouldn't swear that he doesn't take sides with the Jesuits and undertake their apology.' [1]

"*Garnier's wife has felt very justly—but that is not what René will do. It is against the philosophers that he will take sides. He will become pious: and out of wrong-headedness he will finish, like Barsin, by weakness, and without the help of any monk.*"

So that by way of acknowledgment of Rousseau's wish to testify to his esteem and friendship for his friend in the hour of his adversity, Diderot made this visit to him the occasion of the last *scélératesse* recorded on his tablets :—

"One evening talking with him, he wished to sit up late: I asked him for a word in a sentence: instantly he said: 'Let us go to bed.'"

But this was not the only use made of Rousseau's act of friendship. We have to recollect Volx's remark in his letter to Madame de Montbrillant.

"I see by certain words my friend (Garnier) lets fall, that there was some other subject of discussion between them; but as he does not explain himself, I do not understand what it was about."

What is implied is that the subject discussed was Rousseau's unhappy passion for Madame d'Houdetot, and that it was now when Diderot gave Rousseau the advice he promised to follow of confessing his fault to Saint-Lambert.

[1] See Appendix, Note G, vol. ii.

CHAPTER VII

THE LETTER TO SAINT-LAMBERT

Diderot does not deny that it was he who revealed to the Marquis de Saint-Lambert the secret of Rousseau's passion for Saint-Lambert's mistress, Madame d'Houdetot; his defence is that he committed this indiscretion because Rousseau had deceived him; and had assured him that he had himself acknowledged his weakness to the Marquis.

We have two versions of this story: the one told in the *Memoirs*, which follows the tablets very closely; and the one told by Marmontel as related to him by Diderot upon the occasion of a confidential walk: when Diderot must have left his tablets at home—and so bungled a little over the story of the wrongs done him by "the unhappy Jean Jacques."

Let us take the story told in the *Memoirs* first.

Here is the Arsenal note which, referring to the cahier 155, directs the re-writing of this episode.

(Ref.) 155. *Something is wanting in the affair of Dulaurier, René and Garnier; it is not sufficiently clear.* (Il manque quelque chose sur l'affaire de Dulaurier, René et Garnier; cela n'est pas assez clair). As usual, where a note suggests alterations, we have a new cahier (147) as a reproduction of the old cahier (155) [1] *where this episode is interpolated as a note.*[2] In Brunet's MS., vol. viii. p. 31, we discover further alterations, the efforts made by the editor of the printed *Memoirs* to alter the blunder of making Saint-Lambert in Paris, abusing Rousseau to Diderot, at a time when his published

[1] See Appendix, Note D, double cahiers, vol. i.

[2] See facsimile 6, page 86, vol. i.

correspondence shows him to have been ill at Aix-la-Chapelle, and writing on affectionate terms to Jean Jacques. Such difficulties as these did the editor draw down upon himself, by seeking to establish the historical character of his *Memoirs* (see printed *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 144).

(Volx is writing to Madame de Montbrillant, who has just reached Geneva; René is still at Les Roches. In other words, we are at the end of November, or in early December, 1757.)

Volx to Mme. de M.[1] "Not only is this man wicked, but he is certainly out of his mind. I don't know if you recollect that you were told this autumn that Garnier had advised René to write to Dulaurier. Here was the occasion for this. René had summoned Garnier to Les Roches. He went, and found René in a deplorable state. He confided to him that he had the most violent passion for the Countess de Lange, but that his principles did not permit him to yield to it, if even he had had any chance to get listened to, and that consequently he was too sure of himself to dread any dishonest impulse of his love. 'The subject of my torment,' he said, 'and what tears my soul is that Dulaurier suspects my passion and is jealous of me (of *me*, his friend—what sort of opinion can he have of me?), and that he torments the Countess on my account, to the point of accusing her of sharing my sentiments, which I have never allowed myself to reveal to her. It is Madame de Montbrillant,' he added, 'who has stirred up all this trouble, by her inexhaustible coquetry and intrigues!' 'I see only one straightforward thing to do,' replied Garnier; 'it is to write to the Marquis and frankly confess your passion; to protest the Countess knows nothing about it; to justify her in his eyes, and to show him your firm resolution to stifle sentiments that had come to birth in you by no will of yours.

"This counsel transported René with gratitude. He swore to follow it, and a few days later he told Garnier

[1] See facsimile 6, vol. i. pp. 86, 87.

he had done so. *The Marquis Dulaurier arrived in Paris the day of your departure.*[1] They spoke about René. The Marquis permitted himself some contemptuous expressions. Garnier, who knows him for a generous and honest man, was astonished by his injustice. He took him on one side, to ask his reason. The Marquis seemed anxious to avoid an explanation. Garnier, with his usual frankness, said to him at last, that, after the letter René had written to him, he had a right to more indulgent treatment. 'Of what letter do you speak?' asked the Marquis. 'I have only received one, to which the best reply could be made with a stout stick.' The philosopher stood petrified. They came to an explanation. In a word, the Marquis informed Garnier that this letter contained a long sermon on the *liaison* between Dulaurier and the Countess de Lange, where René took him to task as a scoundrel, who betrayed the confidence the Count de Lange had in him! Now mark this, the Countess had in her hands more than twenty letters, each of them more passionate the one than the other, which she has given to Dulaurier, whilst René assured Garnier that he would rather die than tell the Countess he loved her. The philosopher, naturally taken aback by this discovery, wrote next day to René to reproach him with having deceived him. He did not reply; which induced Garnier to go and see him, yesterday, to have an explanation with him. In the evening, after his return, he wrote me the letter of which I send you a copy, for it is a fine one,[2] and deserves to be kept. This morning he came to see me, and has related the details of his visit. René was alone, at the bottom of his garden. Directly he saw Garnier, he cried out, in a voice of thunder, and with his face aflame, 'What have you come here for?' 'I come to find out,' answered the philosopher, 'whether you are mad,

[1] Madame d'Epinay started for Geneva, November 1, 1757. On October 29 Rousseau had Saint-Lambert's letter from Aix-la-Chapelle.

[2] See pages 46, 47.

or wicked.' 'You have known me for fifteen years,' answered René; 'you know that I am not wicked, and I will prove to you that I am not mad. Follow me.' He led Diderot into his library, opened a case full of papers, drew out about twenty letters, which he took some care in selecting from the other papers. 'Here,' he said, 'these are letters to me from the Countess: take them as you please, and read my justification.' The very first letter Garnier fell upon was one where he read clearly that the Countess bitterly reproached René for taking advantage of her confidence in him and endeavouring to awaken her scruples about her *liaison* with Dulaurier, whilst he did not blush to employ the snares of skilful sophistries to seduce her himself. 'Oh, certainly you are mad,' cried Garnier, 'to let me read this; read it yourself; it is perfectly clear.' René grew pale, stammered, then flew into an inconceivable rage, *tore all the papers to pieces with his teeth and nails*,[1] entered on a furious tirade against the indiscreet zeal of friends, and would not admit that he was in the wrong. Did you ever hear of such folly? Now, if you please, René makes it a crime in Garnier to have entered into any explanation with the Marquis, and loudly accuses him of having betrayed his secret! Which is all the more tactless, because it forces Garnier to divulge the facts, in order to escape passing for a traitor! *Here you have this man who made a code of friendship; one has to forgive him something every day, and he pardons nothing in others.* I have done with him."

The last phrase reproduces literally one of the Arsenal notes, viz., "Mettre à la fin de tout ce qui regarde René, voilà cet homme qui faisait un code; il y avait à lui pardonner toute la journée."

Before testing this narrative by comparing it with facts, we have to consider yet another version of the legend

[1] This is the third occasion when René behaved like a maniac, "tearing papers with his teeth and nails"—p. 275, vol. i.; Appendix, Note C, p. 363, vol. i.

of Rousseau's "Atrocious Letter to Saint-Lambert," given by Diderot to Marmontel on the occasion when the tablettes had probably got mislaid, so that he lost his way a little in the pre-arranged plan: but the same charges, in slightly altered form, are still recognizable.

This version will be found in Marmontel's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 246 and 259.

"One day," wrote Marmontel, "that I was alone with Diderot, I expressed to him my indignation at the note Rousseau had put to his preface to the *Lettre à d'Alembert*. 'Never,' I said to him, 'between you and Rousseau could I be in doubt. But tell me, upon what mad notion, or on what pretext, has he outraged you in this manner?' 'Let us,' said Diderot, 'withdraw into this solitary avenue. There I will confide to you, what I only entrust to my closest friends.' When Diderot saw himself alone with me and too far away from every one to make it possible to be overheard, he began his story in these words: 'If you did not already know a part of what I have to tell you, I should have kept with you the same silence that I keep with the public, on the origin of the injury that has been done me by a man I once loved; and whom I still pity, because I believe him very unhappy. It is cruel to be calumniated, calumniated blackly, and in a perfidious tone, of one who claims to be a friend; betrayed, and yet not to be able to defend one's self; but such is my position. You will see that my reputation is not the only one concerned in this affair: and when one can only defend one's honour at the expense of the honour of others, one must be silent; and I am silent. You know the unfortunate passion Rousseau had for Madame H——? He had one day the rashness to declare it to her in a way that offended her sorely. A short time after this, Rousseau came to hunt me up in Paris. "I am a lost man," he said. "Here is what has happened." And he told me his adventure. 'Well,' I said to him, 'where is this huge misfortune?' "How? where is the misfortune? Don't you see that

she will write to L. and tell him I tried to seduce her, and take her away from him? And do you doubt that he will accuse me of insolence and perfidy? Here I have made myself a mortal enemy for life." 'Not at all, not at all,' I said coolly. 'L. is a just man. He knows you: he knows that you are neither a Cyrus nor a Scipio. After all, what is it all about? A moment of delirium—of forgetfulness. What you have to do, is without delay to write to him, to acknowledge everything, giving as your excuse a form of intoxication he is well acquainted with and can the better forgive; and then implore his pardon for this momentary error. I promise you he will only remember it to love you the better for it.' Rousseau, transported with joy, embraced me. "You restore me to life," he said. "And the counsel you give me, also helps me to forgive myself. This very evening I shall write to him." Seeing him tranquillized after this, I took it for granted he had done as we had agreed. Some time afterwards, Saint-Lambert arrived from the army and came to see me. He appeared to me, without explaining why, so profoundly indignant with Rousseau, that my first idea was he had not written: 'Have you not had a letter from him?' I asked. "Yes," he answered, "a letter which deserves a severe thrashing." 'Oh, sir,' said I, 'is it for you to conceive such anger about a moment of madness which he confesses to you, and begs you to forgive? If this letter offends you, it is I whom you should blame, for it was I who advised him to write it.'

"'And pray," he asked: "do you know what this letter contained?" 'I know that it contained a confession, excuses, and a request for pardon.'

"'Nothing of the sort! the letter is a tissue of crafty falsehoods, wherein he tries to throw upon Madame d'Houdetot the blame of his own fault. 'You astonish me,' I said; 'this was not what he promised me to write.' Then, however, to appease Saint-Lambert, I described simply Rousseau's state of grief and repentance, in such a way as to lead him to pity him. It is to this

explanation that Rousseau has given the name of perfidy. But from the moment that Rousseau learnt I had made for him an avowal he had not made himself, he exhaled fire and flame; accusing me of having betrayed him. I heard this and went to see him. "Why do you come here?" he asked. 'To know whether you are mad or wicked,' I replied. "I am neither the one nor the other," he said, "but my heart is wounded and smarting from the hurt you have done it. I do not wish to see you." 'What have I done?' I asked. "You have searched out my innermost feelings, you have torn the secret out of my soul, and have betrayed it. You have given me over to the hatred and scorn of a man who will never forgive me." I let his fury spend itself: and when he had exhausted his store of reproaches, I said: 'Remember we are alone, and all this pathetic eloquence is wasted'—(then, according to Marmontel's narrative, Diderot went through a summary of the legendary incidents until even the eyes of Rousseau were opened to his injustice). 'Then,' continues the story, 'Rousseau was more eloquent and touching in his grief than I had ever seen him. Penetrated by sympathy at the state I saw him in, my eyes filled with tears. Seeing me weep, he was himself overcome; and fell into my arms—we were reconciled. He continued to read me his *Nouvelle Héloïse* and *I to go on foot from Paris to his Hermitage two or three time a week to hear him read it* and to respond as a friend to the confidence of a friend. It was in the forest of Montmorency that we had our meetings. I arrived bathed in sweat; and he did not hesitate to complain if I kept him waiting. It was in this epoch that the *Letter on Theatres* appeared, in which he accused me of outrages and of having betrayed him!"

"'What?' I cried. 'In full peace? It is incredible!' 'Yes, incredible,' he answered, 'but not the less true.'"

These three versions of the legend show some differences, which prove that Diderot did well to consult his tablettes when relating the wrongs done him by the

unhappy Jean Jacques. By the tablettes, and by the *Memoirs*, Rousseau is stated to have summoned Diderot to the Hermitage *because Saint-Lambert has become jealous of Madame d'Houdetot:* by the story told through Marmontel, Rousseau goes to Paris to consult Diderot, because *his amorous expressions have offended Madame d'Houdetot.* We shall find that neither story describes the facts, which show that the only letter Rousseau wrote to Saint-Lambert could not have been suggested by Diderot's advice. Other differences are that whereas the tablettes merely say the letter was "atrocious," the *Memoirs* say that it contained a long sermon about Saint-Lambert's misconduct to the Count d'Houdetot; Marmontel's story says that the atrocious letter tried to throw the blame of Rousseau's passion on Madame d'Houdetot. The real letter (which will presently be given) shows that it was *not* atrocious; and did *not* preach to Saint-Lambert, nor calumniate Madame d'Houdetot. All three accounts make November 1757 the date when the angry Saint-Lambert sees Diderot, and tells him about the atrocious letter "to which one can only reply with a stick." *Hence all three accounts are conclusively proved false, because Saint-Lambert answered Rousseau by an affectionate letter, and was an invalid at Aix-la-Chapelle when he wrote it.* Finally both in the tablettes and the *Memoirs*, Diderot goes to see Rousseau after his interview with Saint-Lambert, as an accuser, and to convict him of imposture, and he returns from this visit, convinced that Jean Jacques is a monster. By Marmontel's story, Diderot goes to justify himself, and smooth down the unreasonable anger of an unhappy friend. He is at once judicious and sympathetic. The unreasonable man weeps in his arms; they are reconciled and (*the season of the year being December*) Diderot makes rendezvous two or three times a week with Jean Jacques in the forest of Montmorency, where he goes on foot from Paris to hear Jean Jacques read his *Nouvelle Héloïse.*

Let us now see whether, in any of these versions, the legend of the Atrocious Letter written by Rousseau to Saint-Lambert can be made to serve the purpose for which it was invented—viz., the purpose of suggesting that some falsehood told by Rousseau, and not *deliberate treachery and secret hatred and desire to injure a man he called his friend* explains Diderot's betrayal to Saint-Lambert *in April* 1758 (for Saint-Lambert did not return before this date to Paris), of the story confided to him in December, or late November, 1757.

Taking the legend as built upon the charges stated, we shall find that the letter Rousseau wrote to Saint-Lambert, in September 1757, had neither of the purposes the different versions of the *Memoirs* and of Marmontel suppose. Rousseau did not write because he had betrayed inadvertently to Madame d'Houdetot his imprudent passion for her and because he was afraid she might complain of him; nor yet because Saint-Lambert tormented his mistress by jealous suspicions. He wrote because Madame d'Houdetot had become cold to him, and because he attributed this change in her manner to her lover. At this time, Madame d'Houdetot knew all about Rousseau's passion for her. She was not in the least either offended at or alarmed by it. But there are signs that (for reasons we discovered when examining Rousseau's alleged crimes against Madame d'Epinay) this passion was less interesting to her than it had once appeared; that it had become somewhat colourless, as ancient history. Several months earlier, in the spring of the year, Rousseau had declared his passion to the mistress of the Marquis de Saint-Lambert, but had assured her that he was content with adoring her, and that he did not desire to render her inconstant to her lover. Madame d'Houdetot had been entirely sympathetic then. She had not shown the smallest timidity or distrust: in short, she had been reckless, and with a recklessness one cannot but feel was either intentionally or very selfishly provocative of transgression—on Rousseau's

side :—for she arranged constant solitary walks with this much enamoured man, in the woods ; and even invited him to sup with her *tête-à-tête* at midnight, by moonlight, in a bosquet of her garden at Eaubonne. Nevertheless, all this had passed off safely, in so far as the constancy to her absent lover Saint-Lambert of the inconstant wife of the Count d'Houdetot was concerned. And although readers of the *Confessions*, following Rousseau's example, generally give all the praise to Madame d'Houdetot, one fact in Rousseau's favour may certainly be deduced from it ; most certainly, all this having happened in June, and things standing as they did in September, it would have been entirely out of date, had Madame d'Houdetot at this time of day, lost confidence in him.

What had happened was that she had lost, not confidence, but interest in him ; or at any rate that her interest had cooled. Saint-Lambert had paid a fortnight's visit to Montmorency. The date can be determined by the fact that the Marquis was present at the Battle of Hastenbeck, which took place on the 26th July. He took his leave immediately after this event. Counting some days for the double journey, and his fortnight's stay, that would make his return to the army about the middle of August. Rousseau's letter is dated the 4th September. He explains in the *Confessions* that after Saint-Lambert's departure, he found Madame d'Houdetot's manner changed to him ; she appeared colder ; and she avoided him. Afflicted by this alteration and convinced he had done nothing to deserve it, but imagining that the Marquis might have hinted that it was not prudent to encourage the romantic hermit, Rousseau took the singular course of writing to Saint-Lambert. Let this letter speak for itself.

"*September* 4th, 1757.

"When commencing to know you I desired to love you : and all I have seen of you has added to this desire. In the hour when I was forsaken by those who were once

dear to me, I owed to you a friend who consoled me for everything: and I attached myself to her at once, because she spoke to me of you. Judge then, dear Saint-Lambert, if I have not reason to love you both: and believe that my heart is not one that lags behind in affection. Why then have you both afflicted me? Let me promptly lighten my soul of the burthen of the complaints I have against you! I complain of you to her: I come now to complain of her to you. She heard me and understood: I hope you will understand me too; and perhaps an explanation dictated by esteem and confidence, may produce amongst new friends, the effect that familiarity and years otherwise alone can give. I thought much about you, and very little about her, when first she came to see me, and when she began to seek my acquaintance. Knowing my tendency to attach myself, and the grief it has already brought me, I avoid new friendships; and although four years ago she invited me as a guest to her house, I had never set foot in it. I could not avoid her: I saw her, and took the agreeable habit of being with her. I was lonely and sad: my afflicted heart was open to consolation: I found it near her. On her side, she found in me a sympathetic friend with whom to share her troubles; we spoke of you: of the *good, too impressionable Diderot, of the ungrateful Grimm*, and of others. The days passed for us pleasantly in this mutual confidence. I attached myself to her as a solitary man is prone to attach himself: she conceived an affection for me also: at least she said so. We had our projects for a time when we three might form a delightful society. But now all is changed, except my heart. Since your departure, she receives me coldly: she scarcely speaks to me, even about you: she finds a hundred pretexts to avoid me; a man whom one wishes to get rid of, could hardly be treated differently! I do not understand what this change means. If I have deserved it, let me be told so: and I will accept my dismissal. If it be simple fickleness, I withdraw to-day, and shall

be consoled to-morrow. But after having responded to the advances that were made to me, after having learned to enjoy a society that has become necessary to my happiness, I believe that the friendship asked from me, gives me some right to claim the friendship offered me? Yes, it is from you that I ask an account of her: for is it not from you that all her inclinations are derived? Who knows this better than I do? I know it perhaps better than you do. Tell me then what is the cause of her coldness to me? Could you fear that I should seek to hurt your interests with her: and that any virtuous severity, wrongly used, could make me perfidious or deceitful? Something in one of your letters has made me fear this. No, no: Saint-Lambert! the heart of Jean Jacques Rousseau hides no treachery. . . . Consult your own heart: it will claim from you for me the restoration of the friend you gave me: who has become necessary to me, and whom I have not deserved to lose. Know this in any case, that however you may use me, you will be—with her—my last attachments. My ill health increases, and more and more isolates me from society; yours alone was to my taste in my present circumstances. If you both separate yourselves from me, I shall withdraw into my own soul. I shall die alone and forsaken in my solitude: and you will never think of me without regret. If you return to me you will find a heart that can never fail to meet half way, those to whom it belongs."

Faults may be found with this letter, as lacking in dignity; but perhaps the last thing that could be said of it is that it is "*atrocious*." It was an unwise longing on Rousseau's part, no doubt, to cheat himself (as people in love in all times have cheated themselves) with the belief that he could cure himself better through friendship with, than by separation from, the object of his passion. But it is not possible to accuse him of a false assertion when he maintained that—after the trials this much

too confiding lady had put him through—he had not deserved mistrust. It is true that, in his letter to Saint-Lambert, if Rousseau told no falsehood, he did not tell the whole truth. He did not for instance admit that he was in love with Madame d'Houdetot. But why should he have made any such avowal? Convinced, as he was, that his passion was unreturned, it would have been a folly on his own account, and a mischievous action in so far as Madame d'Houdetot was concerned, had he by this useless confession provoked the absent lover's jealousy. If, then, Diderot had advised Jean Jacques to reveal his secret passion to Saint-Lambert, he would have proved himself either a very tactless or a very malicious counsellor.

But it can be almost positively affirmed that Diderot was not consulted by Rousseau in these circumstances: and that, at the time when it was written, he knew nothing about the letter, or the true relationship between Jean Jacques and Madame d'Houdetot.

Between Saint-Lambert's departure to rejoin the army in the middle of August, and Rousseau's letter dated 4th September, we have, as it happens, conclusive evidence that Diderot and Rousseau did not meet. As for Marmontel's suggestion that Rousseau went to Paris to consult Diderot, it is established that Rousseau went only once to Paris in the summer of 1757—that is to say in late July, at the *very time when Saint-Lambert arrived:* and he returned after a two days' visit to meet Saint-Lambert at Madame d'Epinay's. After this the Marquis and Madame d'Houdetot went together to sup with Jean Jacques at the Hermitage. There was thus no cause for any letter in this epoch, when these three people were all on perfectly friendly terms, and living near each other. It is proved also that Diderot did not go to the Hermitage in this interval, between the departure of Saint-Lambert in the middle of August, and Rousseau's letter dated 4th September, by a letter from Deleyre, Diderot's and Rousseau's mutual friend,

dated 11th Sept. 1757. This letter proves more than that Diderot has not been lately to see Rousseau: it establishes that it was no imagination on Jean Jacques' part that Diderot aggravated his neglect by constantly making appointments and then breaking them.

"On Wednesday or Thursday next, dear Citizen," wrote Deleyre, "I hope to embrace you and to bring with me M. Diderot. But don't count upon him too certainly, although he has made the appointment with me. He has broken so many engagements of the same kind, that I really don't understand how you, who are the slave of your resolutions, have been able to forgive him this changeableness. But he has so many qualities to redeem this fault. After all, I see now that if, in the past, there were faults on both sides, on your side they have been well repaired. You who believe in virtue, console yourself for the wrong you have not committed."

But if Rousseau did not see Diderot, and received no counsel about the letter he wrote Saint-Lambert: then plainly Diderot's excuse that this counsel given by him, and that his belief that Rousseau had followed it, led him into an indiscretion, is a gratuitous falsehood.

Thus then the first three charges used to support the legend of the Atrocious Letter to Saint-Lambert, which was not atrocious, are dismissed. We have now to see what becomes of the three remaining charges, when examined also in the light of evidence—viz., the indignation of Saint-Lambert against Rousseau, which did not exist; his visit to Diderot in 1757, which was never paid; Diderot's last visit to Rousseau at the Hermitage, which *was* paid, with a different motive to the one alleged: and which was actually the occasion when Diderot first received the confidences he betrayed to Saint-Lambert the following spring.

The best proof that Saint-Lambert never said that the only reply one could make to Rousseau's letter should be delivered by a stick, is the reply he actually

wrote; and which is one of the letters reproduced from the original autographs by M. Streckeisen-Moultou.[1]

"*October, Wolfenbüttel.*

"I only received your your letter of the 4th September, my dear friend, on the 10th of this month. And it is my misfortune to be in the wrong longer than I should have been, had I received your letter earlier. Do not accuse our friend of fickleness, or coldness, towards you: she is capable of neither; she loves always more and more where she has once loved, and it would not be for a friend like you that she would for the first time show herself inconstant. I, alone, must be blamed for her conduct. Her heart has not changed towards you. She loves and honours you, but she has seen less of you because she wished to spare me pain that you did not mean to inflict upon me, but that you did inflict upon me none the less, though the fault was mine. It is I who sought to make you friends, and certainly I have not to reproach you with that. I have a constant desire to unite and gather together those whom I love and esteem the most; and I have always made to myself a delightful idea of how I should have loved to pass my life at Eaubonne between her and you, if we could persuade you to live with her; (si nous pouvions vous engager à vivre chez elle).[2] Here now is the cause of the mischief, here are my stupidities, in other words. On my last visit I thought I saw a change in her—I love her too deeply to lose way in her heart without at once seeing it, and feeling it cruelly. I confess that I thought you the cause of what I had lost. Do not think, my dear friend, that I imagined you perfidious or a traitor. I knew the austerity of your principles, others had spoken

[1] Streckeisen-Moultou, vol. ii. p. 120.

[2] That is to say, to give up Madame d'Epinay's Hermitage and accept one from Madame d'Houdetot!

to me of them, and she herself spoke of them with a respect that my love resented. This was enough to frighten me about an intimacy I had so much wished for; and you will understand how, once possessed by this idea, any number of false and imbecile notions trotted through my head. I have made three people unhappy: and I am the only one who should remain so, because I am the one who has cause for remorse. I have long since tried to repair my injustice to her: I wish to repair my injustice to you. We have neither of us ceased to love and esteem you. Forgive us, go on loving us; we shall merit your heart and you shall be satisfied with ours. I hold you nevertheless to your word given me, never to speak against the tie between us. Believe me, it is not only this tie which attaches me to her, and if even there were between us nothing of what you condemn, she would still continue to be what I most love. I had imagined such hearts as hers, but I have found only one such heart, and it is sufficient to know her character and to love her throughout one's life. The deplorable state of my health forces me to go to take the waters at Aix-la-Chapelle. I am paralyzed in one arm and leg, and my feeble nerves are utterly shattered by the fatigues of this campaign. Give me news of you at Aix-la-Chapelle. Tell me about your health and your occupations; tell me that you forgive me and love me. I don't understand what there is between you and Grimm, but I should tell you he spoke of you as of a man who respected him, but whose injustice made him unhappy. Look upon me and treat me as your friend, and be sure that this friendship will be one of the charms of my life."

Saint-Lambert remained at Aix-la-Chapelle through the months of November and December. On November 21st he wrote again affectionately to Rousseau, and during these two months the Marquis continued to send him tender little messages through Madame d'Houdetot,

who also corresponded with Rousseau on the most affectionate terms.

These letters then illustrate Saint-Lambert's real sentiments towards Rousseau in the epoch of Diderot's visit to Montmorency, in an epoch we can fix as between November 23rd (when Jean Jacques wrote to Madame d'Epinay that he would leave the Hermitage next spring) and December 10th, when he received from her the peremptory reply which he obeyed within a week, by quitting her house, on December 15th.

Diderot's visit paid to Rousseau in this season of troubles (troubles largely brought about by what Jean Jacques still believed to be only his interfering and officious disposition) had not the motive given it in the tablettes, the *Memoirs*, and Marmontel's story;—to see whether Rousseau were mad or wicked, in connection with his conduct to Saint-Lambert. It was a visit professedly made in friendship, to a man abandoned by his other friends, viz., by Grimm and Madame d'Epinay.

"One thing is certain," wrote Diderot, "that no friends are left you except myself; another thing that is certain, is that I am left you."

Even when he wrote the *Confessions*, Rousseau still believed in these affirmations, and esteemed Diderot's visit an act of tardy friendship.

"I had at length," he wrote, "the pleasure of receiving from Diderot this visit, so often promised, and constantly postponed. It could not have come more opportunely. He was my oldest friend, almost the only one left me. It can easily be imagined with what pleasure I received him. My heart was full, I opened it gladly to him. I enlightened him on many facts that had been hidden from him, or disguised, or falsely shown. I told him about all that had happened, everything that it was permissible to tell him. I did not hide from him the unhappy passion, as involuntary as foolish, which had brought me all this grief, but I did not disclose that

Madame d'Houdetot was informed of it, or at any rate that I had told it to her.[1] I spoke to him about the unworthy tricks Madame d'Epinay used to surprise the perfectly innocent letters her sister-in-law wrote me. I wished him to hear these details from the lips of the very persons whom this dangerous woman had attempted to seduce. Thérèse gave him an exact account. But how amazed was I, when the mother, for her part, declared and upheld that she had no knowledge whatever of anything of the sort! Not four days before she had related the whole story to me—and now, before my friend, she flatly contradicted me!"

We have heard another account of this visit, when Rousseau has a voice of thunder, a frowning face, and tears papers with his teeth and nails.[2] The author of this account, the friend who boasted himself the last left Rousseau, and to whom he opened all his heart, upon his return from the Hermitage, at once, we find, sat down and wrote to the mortal enemy of the man he had just quitted a full account of what had been told him under the seal of friendship. Diderot's letter to Grimm, after his last visit to Rousseau at the Hermitage, is given in his (Diderot's) published Correspondence, and it is identical with the letter given in the *Memoirs* from Garnier to Volx. This letter establishes several things. It proves that before December 10th, 1757, that is to say, five months before Saint-Lambert's return to Paris, Diderot knew that Rousseau had not in his letter of September 4th told the Marquis about his love for his mistress; it proves further that whilst Rousseau still trusted Diderot as a friend, and whilst Diderot still professed to his face to be one, he poured forth against Jean Jacques behind

[1] Evidently because had he done this, the inevitable question would have been—why did not Madame d'Houdetot then break off her intimacy with you? Clearly that was the course for an honest woman to take: and Madame d'Houdetot did not take it—till the danger had been run.

[2] See page 30.

his back a flood of invectives, expressing a hatred of the man who has just opened his heart to him, amounting to loathing.

Nor yet again is this all. Diderot and Grimm were both in Paris at this time, and saw each other every day. There was therefore no especial reason why Diderot should have written to Grimm about his impressions, the letter where Jean Jacques is painted as a "monster, a villain, a savage and wicked man, a furious maniac, tearing papers with his hands and teeth" (in short, a hateful, miserable creature, who "half sickens and half appals one, by the spectacle of his degradation") —*unless it had been intended that Grimm should do, what he promptly did do; hand round copies of this "fine letter," so that the world might be informed what sort of a personage the gentle prophet of nature had become, as the result of solitude and the habitation of woods.*

Here is the "fine letter" by Grimm's opinion, which, he told Madame d'Epinay, was "worth preserving."

CHAPTER VIII

LETTER OF DIDEROT TO GRIMM[1]

"THIS man is a villain![2] I have seen him: I have reproached him with all the force given me by honesty and a certain interest which remains in the heart of a friend who was long devoted to him, all the enormity of his conduct: tears poured forth at Madame d'Epinay's feet, at the time when to me he charged her with grave accusations: the odious apology sent you, and where there is not one of the true reasons he had to give: this proposed letter to Saint-Lambert, which should have tranquillized him about the sentiments he reproached himself with: but where, instead, he excuses himself from having sought to awaken scruples in Madame d'Houdetot about Saint-Lambert. In short, I know not what. I am not satisfied with his replies. I had not the courage to show him this: *I preferred to leave him the miserable consolation of believing that he had deceived me.* Let him live! He put into this defence of himself an angry passion which afflicted me. I am afraid he is hardened. (!) Adieu, my friend, let us be, and let us continue to be, honest men, for the state of those who have ceased to be honest frightens me. Adieu, my friend: I embrace you tenderly. I throw myself into your arms like a frightened man. I have been trying in vain to write poetry: this man comes between me and my work and troubles me; it is as though I had one of the damned near me. He is damned—that is certain! Adieu, my friend. Grimm—this, then, is the effect I

[1] See *Oeuvres Diderot, édition Tourneux*, vol. xix. See *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 148.

[2] "Cet homme est un forcené!"

should make upon you, if ever I became a wicked man? In truth I would rather die! Perhaps all I am writing is without common-sense: but I confess I have never experienced such trouble of soul as I am in.

"Oh, my friend! what a spectacle it is—that of a wicked and furious man. Burn, tear this paper, do not let it again fall under my eyes. Let me never see that man again: he would make me believe in devils and hell. If ever I am forced to see him again I am sure I shall tremble all the way. I had a fever on my return. I am angry with myself, for not having let him see the horror he inspired me with: and I only make my peace with myself, when thinking that even you, with all your firmness, would not have been able to do it had you been in my place. I am not sure that he would not have killed me! One heard his cries at the end of the garden—and I saw him. Adieu, mon ami. I shall come and see you to-morrow. I shall come and seek a good man, near whom I can sit down, and be reassured, and who will clear away from my soul I know not what, that is infernal and which torments it. The poets do well to put an immense interval between heaven and hell. In truth, my hand trembles!"

This really "atrocious" letter (where hypocrisy is carried to the verge of absurdity, when one recollects who was the writer, and about whom it was written) nevertheless served the purpose for which it was intended. That is to say, ten months before the publication of the *Lettre à d'Alembert*, and five months before Rousseau had learned to suspect that he had in Diderot not an injudicious friend but a masked enemy, it dealt his reputation "a treacherous blow," in the public—a blow he felt through its effects, although the hand which dealt it was hidden from him. After Diderot's visit, it was not long before rumours reached him of vague accusations against him of unnamed offences, which he could not get definitely stated in

order that he might combat them. "I knew," he wrote in the *Confessions*, "that black atrocities were imputed to me, but I could never learn in what they consisted."

Deleyre's letters to him show that Rousseau did not imagine these rumours. "I am obliged to take your part daily," writes Deleyre on January 23rd.

"I am indignant at all I hear about you," he says again on February 22nd.

"When people speak of you and your friends they always say it is you who have quitted them."

"Yes, my dear friend,—let me take that name in this moment. I hear that they accuse you of black deeds (*des noirceurs*) and I do not for a moment believe you capable of anything of the sort." etc. March 17th.

And Deleyre was not the only one. The sudden change of tone in Madame d'Houdetot's letters to Rousseau began to distress and bewilder him: but the cause is very evident, when we discover that the change began when Diderot's letter, describing Rousseau as a villain and a maniac, had had time to circulate in Paris. The impression was intense. Before this moment, the romantic hermit, and famous man of letters, was one whose devotion did honour to a woman of sensibility, and a Countess. But Madame d'Houdetot became uncomfortable when she heard of the atheist Diderot transformed into a believer (in devils and hell, at any rate,) by the abominable contortions of the furious maniac Jean Jacques! A platonic flirtation with one pronounced "certainly damned," was more to one's discredit than an un-platonic flirtation with an honest man.

In December, Madame d'Houdetot had written to Rousseau: "Count on my tender attachment, founded on your virtues, and on your friendship for me and for what I love." But in February, although poor Rousseau had not even seen her in the interval, she has nothing to say about his virtues, but only about his

faults; and she tells him that he is himself the great obstacle in the way of the progress of her attachment. She concludes: "Nevertheless, my friendship for you, *such as it is*, will continue to be yours, *be you what you may*, unless you were guilty of black deeds (*des noirceurs*) or unworthy acts, of which I cannot believe you capable."

Rousseau's reply to this insulting condenscension from a woman whom he had honoured with a consideration she did not deserve, is, when one recollects he was still unfortunate enough to love her, one of the fine acts of his life.[1]

But it was two months later that Rousseau received the first convincing proof that he had a secret enemy in Diderot, who had betrayed his confidence, and dealt him a treacherous blow. He was correcting the proofs of the *Lettre à d'Alembert* when, in May 1758, after a long silence, Madame d'Houdetot wrote:

"*Eaubonne, May* 6, 1758.[2]

"It is a long time since you heard from me; it is only just I should tell you the reasons, and also those for my conduct with you in the future. I have to complain of your indiscretion, and of that of your friends. I should have kept all my life the secret of your unhappy passion for me, and I hid it from the one I love, in order to prevent him from feeling estranged from you. *You have spoken of it to people who have made it public*, and who have insisted upon probabilities in such a way as to injure my reputation. Some time back these rumours reached my lover, who was afflicted at my having concealed from him a passion I never encouraged, but which I hid from him, in the hope that you would become reasonable and remain our friend. I saw a change in him, which nearly cost me my life. The justice he at last does me by recognizing the honesty of my

[1] See Appendix, Note H, vol. ii.

[2] Streckeisen-Moultou, vol. i. page 411, letter 37.

motives, has restored my peace; but I will not risk any further disturbance of it, and I owe it to myself to avoid all suspicion. I also owe it to my reputation to break off all intercourse with you, as I could not keep up any without danger to my good name. From the moment that the world knows you are in love with me, it would be no longer decent for me to see you in private, and all that makes up my society displeases you; so that you have never tried to see me with my friends. You may be entirely reassured about what we think of you, my lover and I. In the first moment, when he was informed of your passion, he ceased to see in you all the virtue he had believed in. But now he pities your weakness and does not reproach you with it: and both of us are far from joining those who try to defame you; we dare, and shall continue to dare, always, to speak of you with esteem."

"This letter," Rousseau said, "brought me in a new affliction, and one to which I was more sensible to than any thing I had yet experienced. 'And thou, also, Diderot,' I exclaimed; 'unworthy friend!'"

Only to Diderot had Rousseau opened his heart: and consequently from no one else could have come the betrayal of the secret. Nevertheless, he did not, even so, decide the case as judged, until he had confirmation from Saint-Lambert himself. It is true that Saint-Lambert, who called upon Rousseau at Mont Louis, saw only Thérèse Levasseur; and that consequently the actual words spoken by him were brought to Rousseau by a person he trusted, but who certainly was not trustworthy. In this case, however, it has to be remembered that Diderot himself admitted he did reveal to the Marquis the secret of Rousseau's passion for Madame d'Houdetot; and inasmuch as all the explanations put forward by him to prove that this revelation was not a betrayal have been shown to be false, Diderot remains proved guilty of the act of which he was accused. Nor

again is this all. By this inquiry, we have found that the necessity there was for the unmasking of this enemy, disguised as a friend, was even greater than Rousseau knew it to be.

Looking back to the *Memoirs* before concluding what has to be said about this alleged crime of Rousseau's against Diderot, we find a remarkable example of their author's want of respect for historical facts which imposed so much labour on unlucky editors who had imprudently pledged themselves to support the veracity of this work.

In the Arsenal Manuscript, we have the159th, an old cahier, reproduced in a new cahier 149. The reference to Brunet's manuscript is vol. viii. p. 38; to the printed *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 154.

Madame de Montbrillant is writing from Geneva to Volx, *before* René has left *Les Roches*, that is to say, before the 15th December, 1757. *That is, again, to say, ten months before the publication of the Lettre à d'Alembert.* In the old cahier 159 we find *as an inserted note:*—

"I wish to ask you what is this about a printed letter of René's of which Voltaire has been told? It seems that in this letter he accuses a friend of the most shameless treachery; and they say that Garnier is marked out, by the most unmistakable signs. What is the meaning of this new horror? On what is it founded and what is it about? Can it be what you wrote to me, about Dulaurier?"

In the 149th cahier of the Arsenal and in Brunet's manuscript, this phrase is inserted in the text; and in the last manuscript, we discover the editor's corrections which make the sentence in the printed book: "What is this about a letter from Rousseau to d'Alembert?"

Volx's reply, a note in the old cahier 158,[1] is in the text of the new cahier 150 (see also, Brunet's MS. vol. viii., and printed *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 162).

[1] See facsimile 7, page 86, vol. i.

"Here is what this unhappy René has just done, and the explanations you ask me for. He had fulminated against Garnier, openly accusing him of having wickedly betrayed his secret, and been false to the confidence he had given him; and this because of his explanation with Dulaurier, about René's letter to him. His complaints became so indecent and so public, that Dulaurier took the trouble of going to the Hermitage himself to justify Garnier, and explain how the disclosure came about. He quitted René convinced that his suspicions were quieted, and expecting from him that he would publicly exonerate his friend from blame. Not at all; four days afterwards appeared a printed letter by René where he renewed his accusations against Garnier, *and signalized him as a man without honour and religion!* This letter was in the press at the very time when he swore to the Marquis that it was delightful to him to recognize his friend's innocence."

In these same cahiers (157 old and 149 new) another alteration has to be noted in connection with a letter from Garnier, which is also produced in Diderot's correspondence as a genuine letter.[1] By the old cahier it was addressed to the Doctor Tronchin, and the fact would prove the endeavour to influence a personage who at the time was on professedly friendly terms with Rousseau; in the corrected version, however, over Tronchin's name is written: "*one named M. N——, a minister and preacher.*"

The letter affords a fresh proof of the extraordinary sanctifying effect of hatred upon the atheist Diderot. We have already seen how Rousseau's abominable grimaces and fury made him believe in devils and hell. We have now to see how reprobation of this perverted being led the philosopher, whose doctrine was "*that properly speaking there are no causes but physical causes: and that vice and virtue are words void of meaning;*" to ejaculate: "*I, who esteem virtue so much that I would willingly*

[1] See *Oeuvres Diderot*, vol. xviii.

give all I possess to have arrived at this moment of my life with the innocence I had at birth; or to reach the term of my existence with pardon for the faults I have committed, and the consciousness of not having augmented their number.

"There is, then, nothing in the world to be preferred to virtue," continues this enthusiast, "and if it do not appear to us the supreme good, it is because we are corrupted, and have not enough virtue left to know its value. I do not write to you, but I am talking with you, as once I talked with this man, who has buried himself in the depths of a forest, where his heart has become bitter, and his morals perverted. How I pity him! Imagine that I loved him: that I cannot but remember him: that I see him alone between crime and remorse, with deep waters near him.[1] He will often be the torment of my thought. Our common friends have judged between him and me: I have kept them all, and not one remains to him. It is an atrocious action to publicly accuse an old friend, even if he be guilty: but what name are we to give the action if it should happen that the friend be innocent? And what name should one give the accuser if in the depth of his heart he acknowledged the innocence of the man whom he accused? I fear, sir, that your compatriot has quarrelled with me because he could not support my presence. During two years, he had taught me to forgive his private offences; but this is public, and I have no remedy for it. I have not read his last book. They tell me he shows himself religious in it. If this be so, I wait for him at the last." (*Si cela est, je l'attends au dernier moment.*)

It stands, then, as an established fact, that Rousseau was not guilty of having deceived Diderot, nor of having accused him falsely of treachery; and that he was

[1] See Arsenal Note (Appendix). *René qui ne se noie pas parceque l'eau est trop froide.* This note seems to indicate that René was to be described as contemplating suicide; but as prevented by cowardice and the 'coldness of the water': Madame d'Epinay did not carry out this suggested "change" to be made in the fable.

not certainly the aggressor in their quarrel. But by the agency of the Count d'Eschernay, Diderot in 1763 made advances to Rousseau : and Rousseau declined the offered reconciliation ? Not exactly. Diderot asked for the withdrawal by Rousseau of the charge of treachery as a condition of this reconciliation. And Rousseau replied to the Count d'Eschernay : " I do not understand, sir, what, after seven years of silence, M. Diderot now exacts from me ? I have no disavowal to make. I am very far from wishing him ill ; and still further from doing him any harm or from speaking evil of him. I know how to respect to the end the rights of friendship even when it has expired. But I do not renew it—this is my inviolable law."

Rousseau's letter is dated 6th March, 1763. On the 15th January, 1763, a letter of Diderot's in the *Correspondance Littéraire* shows that this attempt to recover the mask of friendship did not prevent him from secretly endeavouring to injure the man he professed to desire to be reconciled to.[1]

D'Eschernay was not in the inner circle of the *abonnés* to the *Correspondance Littéraire*, and he took Diderot's professions literally. " The attempt of Diderot does him honour," he decides, " and Rousseau's refusal to meet him half way is not the best incident in his life. But the vengeance taken for it by Diderot after his death, in the savage note added on to his Essay, would be inexcusable, in any one but Diderot."

In a letter to M. Dupeyrou, d'Eschernay explains why, in his opinion, Diderot is to be, if not excused, judged more leniently than any one else for exhaling his rage over the corpse of a man who had been his friend, but who had refused his efforts at a reconciliation. The reason was simply that Diderot was " an impetuous hater ! "

Let us now see whether impetuosity, or any " natural right," such as La Harpe maintained belonged to Diderot, to give back to Rousseau the titles received

[1] See page 138.

from him, can render the note to the Essay upon Seneca anything but a revelation of concentrated hatred and malignity ; and whether an exaggerated sense of wrong, or an unscrupulous ingenuity in falsehood, characterizes this endeavour to blacken the future fame of the prophet of nature, whom the flattered sophist in his epoch was sick and weary of hearing called "the virtuous."

Here was the first attack published in 1778, a few months after Rousseau's death. Diderot wrote :

"If by some eccentricity, which is not without an example, there should ever appear a work where honest men are pitilessly torn to pieces by an artificial scoundrel who, to give weight to his unjust and cruel imputations against others, paints himself in odious colours, anticipate this event, and ask yourselves whether an impudent fellow, a Cardan, is a witness worthy of belief: what could calumny have cost such a creature, what could one crime, more or less, add to the secret turpitude of a life hidden for more than fifty years under a thick mask of hypocrisy? Fling far from you his infamous libel : and fear that, seduced by a perfidious eloquence, or led away by the mad and puerile exclamations of his enthusiasts, you may become his accomplices. Detest the ungrateful man who speaks evil of his benefactors. Detest the atrocious being who does not hesitate to blacken his old friends. Detest the coward who leaves on his tomb the revelation of the secrets that have been confided to him or that he has surprised in his lifetime. For my part, I swear that my eyes shall never be soiled by reading this writing : I protest I should prefer his invectives to his praises. But has such a monster as this ever existed? I cannot think it."

Five years later, in a new edition of the Essay, Diderot reproduced this note, and added to it :—

"This paragraph of my work has made a noise; it has been said that my attack was addressed to Jean Jacques Rousseau. Has this Jean Jacques, then, written a work such as I describe? Has he calumniated his old friends?

Has he exhibited the blackest ingratitude to his benefactors? Has he left on his tomb the revelation of secrets confided to him? This cowardly and cruel indiscretion, may it trouble united families? and kindle disputes between people who love each other? If so, I shall write on his monument—'this Jean Jacques was a perverted soul.' But has Jean Jacques done nothing of all this? Then it was not of him that I spoke. Censors, of what do you complain? If any one is to blame it is yourselves. I have sketched a hideous head and you have written the name of the model beneath it.

"Had it been printed in the public papers: Jean Jacques, when dying, recognized the cruel injustice he had committed; had it been published that, in the presence of witnesses, he had torn his odious *Confessions* in pieces, his enemies would have held their tongues; the admirers of his talents might have ranked him with the first writers of the nation, and the fanatics of his virtue have placed him amongst the saints. No, Censors, no, it is not the fear of being maltreated myself in the posthumous work of Jean Jacques which has made me speak—you do not know me. I know by one of the most truthful of men, M. Dussault, that I am unhappily spared amongst a number of persons whom he has torn in pieces. This time I am the avenger of others. . . . To assure me of Jean Jacques' sublime virtues they refer me to his works—it is as though I were sent to the sermons of a preacher to assure me of his moral conduct. We have each of us one saint: Jean Jacques is the saint of my Censor, Seneca is mine: with this difference between the saints—that the one belonging to my Censor more than once secretly worshipped mine; and with this difference between the Censor and myself, that he has not lived with my Saint Seneca, and that after having lived on equal terms for seventeen years in the cell of his Saint Jean Jacques, I ought to know him better than he does. Say we are two fanatics: the most ridiculous is the one who laughs at his neighbour. Two

hundred years ago, Jean Jacques would have been the founder of a sect, in all times he would have been a demagogue in his country. The habitation and the solitude of forests ruined him. One does not grow better in woods, with the character he took there, and the motive which led him there. What happened to him, I had foretold.

"But by what prodigy does he who wrote the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar*, who turned the God of the country into derision, painting him as a festive personage who loved good wine and did not hate courtesans, and lived on friendly terms with the farmer-generals of the period;[1] he who treated the mysteries of religion as absurdities, and its miracles as fairy tales, by what prodigy does he count after his death so many zealous partisans in the classes most opposed to such sentiments? The reply is easy—it is that he was an anti-philosopher. That amongst his fanatics, those who would drag to the stake an indiscreet philosopher who had professed half his blasphemies, hate their enemies more than they love their God. It is that amongst these fanatics are those who attribute little importance to religious certitude, but who hate the priest less than the philosopher—it is that amongst these fanatics are a number of old women, who naturally adopt the views of their director; and of young women seduced by his voluptuous paintings; a number of worldly people, who forget his *Treatise upon Inequality*, or who forgive it in consideration of his aversion for the severe morality they dread, which dares to prefer talents and virtue to wealth and rank; a number of men of letters, who, out of interest, or from a spirit of adulation, seek to please his powerful protectors from whom they expect favours, or for whom Jean Jacques' character and moral practices are indifferent because they admire his talent.

"But after living twenty years with the philosophers, how did Jean Jacques become anti-philosophic?

[1] See page 146.

"Precisely as he became a Catholic amongst Protestants, a Protestant amongst Catholics, and that between Catholics and Protestants he professed Deism and Socinianism.

"As in the same week he wrote two letters to Geneva, in the one exhorting his fellow-citizens to peace, in the other exciting them to revolt.[1]

"As he pleaded the cause of savages in Paris, and would have pleaded for the civilized man in the forests of Canada.

"As he wrote against the theatre, after he had produced plays.

"As he abused letters, after cultivating them all his life.

"*As he calumniated the man he esteemed most highly, after having recognized his innocence, and as he sought to be reconciled to him after he had calumniated him.*[2]

"As having preached against moral licentiousness he wrote a licentious novel.

"As after placing the Jesuits at the head of the dangerous orders of monks, he was *on the point of* taking their defence when the civil authorities banished them and the ecclesiastical authorities expelled them from amongst religious associations.[3]

"When the programme of the Academy of Dijon appeared he came to consult me on the side he should take. 'The side you will take,' I said, 'is the one no one else will choose.' 'You are right,' he said.[4]

"What he wrote to M. de Malesherbes he has said to me twenty times: 'I feel my heart is ungrateful: I hate benefactors, because a benefit demands gratitude, that gratitude is a duty: and that a duty is insupportable to me.'[5]

[1] See Note II, vol. ii., for Tronchin's first version of this libel.

[2] See d'Eschernay's letter asking in Diderot's name for the withdrawal of the charge, and Rousseau's refusal, Note A, vol. i.

[3] See page 92, vol. i., and Appendix.

[4] See Note B, Appendix, vol. i.

[5] See Note K, Appendix, vol. ii.

"'But why did you spend these seventeen years in the cell of a monk you despise?'

"Ask a lover deceived for the reason of his attachment to a faithless mistress, and you will learn the motive of the strong attachment of a man of letters for a man of letters of distinguished talent.

"Ask a benefactor the reason for his attachment to, or his regrets for, an ungrateful protégé, and you will find that the most difficult tie to break is the one of a benefit conferred which flatters one's self esteem.

"'But is it well to wait for the death of the ungrateful and wicked man before exposing his wickedness?'

"Without doubt: if his wicked deeds survive him. Without doubt if during his lifetime complaints against him would have meant disclosures harmful to the reputation and peace of mind of deserving people.

"'And what proves to us the truth of what you advance now when the true contradictor has ceased to exist?'

"Twenty, thirty, honest and irreproachable witnesses, whose voices have been raised the moment they could make themselves heard without mischievous consequences; and in the moment when they had to resist the most skilful malice in order not to be sharers in it.

"Rousseau has ceased to exist. Although he accepted from the greater number of us during long years all sorts of benevolent assistance and friendly services, and although he recognized my innocence, he perfidiously and in the most cowardly way insulted me, yet I neither persecuted nor hated him (!); I esteemed the writer but I did not esteem the man, and contempt is a sentiment which does not dispose one to violent methods. *All my resentment was shown in my rejection of his repeated attempts to make friends with me again—confidence was destroyed.*

"I bear no ill will to his memory: *but if Jean Jacques were a good man one might conclude, and malicious persons have concluded, that he was for a long time*

FREDERIC MELCHIOR GRIMM

(fait le Baron de Grimm par le Duc de Saxe-Gotha, 1723—1807.)

"Ce fut lorsqu'il n'était que lecteur du Duc de Saxe-Gotha que Rousseau le connut, 1749. Jean Jacques le produisit dans les sociétés où lui-même était reçu ; Grimm reconnut ce service en détachant de lui tous ses amis."

Musset-Pathay, vol. ii. 403.

[*To face page* 61.

CHAPTER IX

ROUSSEAU'S 'CRIMES' AGAINST GRIMM

ROUSSEAU'S crimes against Grimm, by Diderot's account, were :

"He accused Grimm of maliciously seeking to deprive him of those who employed him as a copyist, and notably of Monsieur d'Epinay.

"He treated Grimm as a profound scoundrel : and at the same time reconciled himself with him and made him the judge of his conduct with Madame d'Epinay."

In connection with the last charge it has been seen how Rousseau, to please Madame d'Epinay, approached Grimm with the wish for a reconciliation, and how Grimm took advantage of this indulgence to humiliate him.

It has been seen, too, how, to please Madame d'Houdetot, and to disarm a mischief maker she dreaded, Rousseau constituted Grimm a judge of whether he was bound to follow Madame d'Epinay to Geneva : and how Grimm seized this opportunity of insulting Rousseau and of violently proclaiming a rupture of their intimacy.

So that, if to have imprudently imagined that Grimm could be either conquered by generosity, or disarmed by confidence, can be counted a crime in Rousseau, he was guilty of this charge.

As for the first charge, if for an injured man to accuse the man who has injured him of the wrong done him be a crime, then again Rousseau was guilty of this offence. He did affirm that Grimm sought to rob him of employers by maintaining that he was an inefficient copyist : and it is proved that Grimm actually did behave in this way. What is more, the proof that he

endeavoured to convey to M. d'Epinay the impression that Rousseau could not be relied upon as an accurate or punctual workman is found in the *Memoirs*.

But here it is maintained that the humorous Grimm was only indulging in a harmless pleasantry: and that the morbid and suspicious Jean Jacques did not know how to take a joke with good temper. The incident is worth quoting because it is upon this episode that Rousseau's French biographer, Saint-Marc Girardin, founds his assertion that Rousseau's real grievance against Grimm was, not that he found faults in his copies, but that "he exposed him as a humbug." Needless to add Saint-Marc Girardin does not give us any proofs that Rousseau was a humbug: in other words, that he only pretended to copy music to screen his readiness to accept alms under the cover of supposed payments for work he never meant to do. For this writer it is enough that he finds this impression conveyed by the story in the *Memoirs*.

It is then useful to recognize that the story as Saint-Marc Girardin read it, and as it stands to-day in all printed editions of Madame d'Epinay's book, has been doctored, and "given an air of historical accuracy," by MM. Brunet and Parison.

Here is the episode, as it is related in both manuscripts: Archives MS., cahier 131; and Brunet's MS., vol. vii.

Madame de Monbrillant writes:

"Talking with René last week, I asked him what would be his occupations.[1] He told me he intended to return *to his drawing and to painting in oils:* 'If I am annoyed,' he said, 'I shall start as a house painter, and decorate over doors. Give me your practice, and recommend me to your friends, as a painter of fans and screens. But get me customers who are in no hurry: for I intend to paint at leisure: and when the spirit moves me.' I ordered six fans from him

[1] René is just established in his retreat.

(adds Madame de Montbrillant) and M. de Montbrillant ordered some screens."

A few pages later, the story goes on:

"Yesterday a discussion between Volx and René arose whilst we were out walking, which in reality was only meant for a pleasantry. René pretended to lend himself to it good-naturedly: but he suffered inwardly, if I do not greatly deceive myself. He had brought M. de Monbrillant *some paper fans and some screens.* M. de Montbrillant asked him if he were in a mind to undertake twelve decorative panels in oils, for over doors. He replied, 'Perhaps yes—perhaps no: it all depends upon my mood and my health.' 'In that case,' said M. de Montbrillant, 'I shall only give you six: because I want to be certain of having them.' 'Well,' answered René, 'I can promise you six that shall put the remaining six to shame.'—'See all of you,' said Volx, laughing, 'what vanity he has already developed as a painter! If you were to say that not a comma is wrongly placed in your writings every one would agree with you: but I don't mind betting that you have some leaves and stems out of drawing in your screens!' Although laughing whilst accepting the bet, René grew red: and he grew redder still when upon examination M. Volx was proved right. René remained thoughtful and gloomy for the rest of the evening, and he returned to the Roches this morning although it was pouring with rain."

Now, although it is evident that the transparent disguise of making René a painter of fans, instead of, like Rousseau, a copyist of music, does not alter the intention of the teller of the story (which is to prove that the suspicious hermit took offence at what was meant for a simple joke); it is also evident that the story is not presented to us in a form that compels us to take it as historically exact.

Madame d'Epinay's letter to Rousseau persuading him to make his peace with Grimm *is* authentic: and

here she speaks of Rousseau's chief complaint against Grimm as two years old:[1] in other words, the endeavour to take away from him his employment began before he left Paris. But the value of the incident, as it stands in the *Memoirs*, is that it exhibits the effort to lend the appearance of a "pleasantry" to an effort made by Grimm to injure Rousseau in his manual trade: thus it shows that the accusation made in the *Confessions* was not an imaginary one.

Accepting the evidence of the *Memoirs* for what it is worth, that is to say, accepting it as showing us, not what was really true, but what Grimm and Diderot desired should be believed, we find this evidence establishes that Grimm made no disguise of his detestation of Rousseau: of his endeavours to destroy Madame d'Epinay's confidence in and affection for him: and of his efforts to open Diderot's eyes to the abominable character of his old friend, for whom, so the *Memoirs* would have us believe, when Grimm's influence was removed, Diderot in hours of weakness was liable to fits of affection. Nor is it anywhere suggested in the *Memoirs* that Volx (Grimm's double) had any special or personal cause of complaint against René (Rousseau's counterpart). Not at all: René had introduced Volx to Madame de Montbrillant: had sung his praises, and the lady was in these circumstances both surprised, and a little, at first, scandalized, when Volx appeared to her over-severe and harsh in his judgment of his friend. But the cause of all this was Volx's extraordinary moral superiority to René: and then his penetration into this man's unreasonableness: and his prophetic insight, enabling him to foretell, even before René has done anything amiss, that he was going to behave badly to all his friends.

It is useful to notice that this was also the position assumed by Grimm in the *Literary Correspondence*, when, safe from all contradictions, he gave his explanations behind Rousseau's back and to a circle pledged to secrecy,

[1] See page 265, vol. i.

of his rupture with his old friend, Jean Jacques. He insisted then upon the fact that Rousseau had not personally injured him, or in any way given him private cause of offence.

"Just nine years ago," he wrote, in 1766: "I found myself compelled to break off all intimacy with him, *although I had nothing to reproach him with relatively to myself: and although he had never made any reproach against me during the whole time of our liaison.*"

The last clause is a falsehood. Rousseau did reproach Grimm with having taken away from him all the friends he had given him. But the statement that Grimm had nothing to reproach Rousseau with, is literally true. Only what the editor of the *Literary Correspondence* does not state, needs to be added; that he had a great deal to thank Rousseau for. When Grimm came as a friendless stranger to Paris in 1749, it was Rousseau who took him by the hand, and introduced him to the Baron d'Holbach, to Diderot, to Madame d'Epinay, in short to the whole circle of those acquaintances he worked afterwards to transform into Rousseau's enemies.

But in the *Memoirs*, whilst it is admitted that René in the first instance introduced Volx to Madame de Montbrillant, it is related that Volx's own upright and chivalrous defence of that lady's reputation, upon an occasion when she was abominably maligned, won her gratitude and admiration, first of all: and that these sentiments ripened into love. And by the accepted method of taking Madame d'Epinay's narrative as true history, the story of Grimm's duel in defence of Madame d'Epinay's good name is accepted as a real event by Sainte-Beuve, by Saint-Marc Girardin, by E. Scherer, by MM. Perey and Maugras: and indeed by the whole group of critics who believe in the essential veracity of the *Memoirs*. Nevertheless, we have to realize that we have no authority for this incident, outside of

Madame d'Epinay's work. No contemporary chronicle alludes to this extraordinary duel, so absolutely at variance with established customs and ideas, between a Baron, or any other aristocratic personage, of the intimate society of the Count de Friesen—Marshal of France, and nephew of the more famous Marshal, Maurice of Saxony—and an obscure young German, a member of the Count's household; at that time, entirely dependent for his daily bread upon the Count's protection.[1] Nor does Meister, Grimm's assistant-editor upon the *Literary Correspondence* for thirty years, and the writer of the obituary notice upon him in 1808 which has supplied future biographers with their materials, show any knowledge of this duel, which, if it had ever taken place, would have reflected so much honour upon Madame d'Epinay's champion that it is difficult to believe so vain a personage as Grimm would have allowed it to be forgotten by the younger man than himself to whom he entrusted the details of his career.[1]

Nor does Rousseau mention the incident in the *Confessions*, nor does he even allude to the suspicions against Madame d'Epinay which (so the story found in the original manuscript of the *Memoirs* relates) led him to write a small novel about the false reputations created by methods of malicious gossip: a work which, published anonymously, "created a great impression." This last episode the prudent Brunet suppressed in the printed work, because he foresaw that if it were affirmed that Jean Jacques had published, seven years before the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, a novel that had made a great impression, inquisitive critics would begin to inquire where that novel was? But exactly the same authority belongs to the story that Rousseau wrote a novel in Madame d'Epinay's defence as to the story that Grimm fought a duel to vindicate her reputation: or to state the case more correctly, both these incidents belong to the same story used to illustrate the different

[1] See Note L, Appendix, vol. ii.

characters of these two men; the chivalrous Volx, who, although he has only at the time a slight acquaintanceship with Madame de Montbrillant, cannot endure to hear an innocent lady's reputation torn to pieces by malicious libertines, and therefore risks his life to defend her honour, and the vain and selfish René who hides himself first of all, when writing to defend his friend and benefactress; and then, because the book makes a stir, claims the authorship of it; and thus spoils the effect it had produced as an impartial argument.

The date when this incident is supposed to have taken place is determined by the death of Madame de Julli, Madame d'Epinay's sister-in-law and confidential friend, in December 1752.[1]

Madame de Julli, a very beautiful and very dissipated young woman, was seized with malignant smallpox and died in five days. Madame d'Epinay, with the heroism that belonged to the epoch, secluded herself with the sick woman: attended to her: received her last confidences, carried out her last wishes. In none of the contemporary society papers where the tragically sudden death of this young woman of fashion is recorded, is found any allusion to the disappearance of ornaments after her death, or to the suspicious destruction of papers: or to any duel fought, or to any anonymous novel published and afterwards claimed by the famous author of the *Devin du Village*, in connection with mischievous rumours about Madame de Julli's friends or relatives.

Turning now to the *Memoirs* as the only authority for this history, what do we find? First of all we have in the 114th cahier of the Archives MS., the impressive scene of Madame de Ménil and Madame de Montbrillant, imprisoned in the sick-chamber. One of Madame d'Epinay's masterpieces this!—"Autour de chaque fait

[1] Madame de Julli was buried in the church of St. Roch, Rue Ste. Honoré; the monument to her memory by Falconet is still to be seen there.

l'air du temps circule." How one feels the truth of the de Goncourts' praise! And what an amazing time it is: and what mingled sensations and emotions of repulsion and horror, of tender compassion and fervent respect, does this atmosphere, penetrated with its life, awaken in us.

Madame de Julli becomes, in the *Memoirs*, Madame de Ménil. She has been the confidante of the heroine: and in her turn has confided her own love affairs. So that we are in a position to realize who these two young society women are, who are shut up together in this isolated chamber, with the malignant plague of smallpox, that is also one of the manifestations of the century's corruption. In their loveless marriages, their passions and adventures, their intrigues and rivalships, and in their kinder hours of friendship and sympathy, too, we have followed them, without suspecting the existence in them of the essential qualities that shine brightly here. Now the world, where troublesome husbands and inconstant lovers are fading figures, is shut out: and by themselves, these two women, without religious faith, without what is called a moral system—by sheer force of human sympathy with each other, and by the aid of the self-respecting philosophy which belongs to their training ("the method of using reason for one's happiness") have to face unflinchingly a desperate situation. How well they come through it, both of them! The one woman who has to die, and who knows it, struck down in the heyday of her pride as a reigning beauty and in the fervour of a new passion, yet able to recognize the one thing left to her to do—to set her failing faculties to work "to stifle regret for all she loses, and the grief she leaves behind her." And there is an even finer word of hers than this, the refusal of this creature of caprice in the world's sight, who has played with and broken all conventional bonds, to break faith with herself at the last, for the sake of the world and conventions: and inasmuch as she has no belief in the rites of the Church, to go through the form of confession.

"No," the dying woman replies to the friend who urges "it might be as well? after all, it is only a form?" "No: the last act of my life shall not be a falsehood."

And the other woman, also of society, also of faulty morality tried by conventional standards, she, too, tried by the merely human standard, comes through this crisis heroically. See her, first of all, forgetful of peril of contagion from a disease that for a woman of fashion might mean disfigurement worse than death, entirely absorbed by the task of keeping guard over this bed, over the peace of her friend's last hours, and over her liberty to die as she pleases. See her intelligently and prudently, as well as fearlessly, temporizing with the accommodating Curé, persuading him that kindness, as well as his own interests, urge him to keep out of sight of the dying woman, and to wait in the darkened room for a time; so that by this device the odious law may be evaded, condemning the corpse of one who has died refusing confession to be dragged on a hurdle naked through the streets, and cast in the common sewer. See her, when all is over, mastering womanly grief and terror of death: and before announcing what has happened, loyally, and without any other watcher than the rigid figure on the bed, opening the casket with the key given her and braving legal risks and calumny, by casting on the fire the compromising love letters, that would have left a legacy of sorrow and shame to mourners, now allowed to keep unspoiled their heritage of tender regrets.

Scenes like this in Madame d'Epinay's *Memoirs* justify their description of "pictures from the life," which do not merely illustrate, but call up before us as true and convincing what literal historical statements leave incomprehensible and incredible, viz. the contradictions of this amazing world. On the one side, the unwholesome physical and social conditions of life; the inhumanity and fanaticism called by the name of religion: the injustice and inherited barbarism embodied as laws: all the evident and repulsive symptoms of a social system

rotten to the core: but on the other side, the sane philosophy, the dignity in face of disaster, the loyalty and self-sacrifice in friendship, the courage to meet death —so many of the self-respecting virtues, as well as all the gracious amenities, of a highly civilized humanity. And especially they invest with vivid reality the women of this world: such women as Madame de Julli, and as Madame d'Epinay, especially. The pictures leave them far from us still, of course, inhabitants of another sphere. Yet what pride they give us in them too! Brave and kind women of a world on which the sun has set; as Rousseau said of you, your vices belonged to your time: your virtues were your own.

So that the description of Madame de Ménil's death gives us Madame d'Epinay at her best. But the story that follows, of the suspicions that attach themselves to the heroine because some deeds are missing from her sister-in-law's papers, and of the duel by Volx, and of the novel by René, are in her worst style: or rather they are not by her at all. Both the Arsenal notes and the Archives cahiers show that the whole story, with its two incidents, has been interpolated as one of the "changes made in the fable."

Here are the Arsenal notes where we have traced the complete history of the suspicions after Madame de Ménil's death: and of the behaviour to her of her friends in her period of disgrace. It will be observed that the suggestion is that a diamond ring should be missing. The alteration from a jewel to documents certifying a claim against M. de Montbrillant, is one that would have been suggested by the improbability of an ordinary theft in the case of a lady in the position of Madame de Montbrillant. And this improvement upon the original idea is a fresh proof that the whole incident was a gratuitous invention.

125. Madame de Ménil has given a diamond to Volx for his debts; he goes away: she dies: Madame

de Montbrillant is suspected of having taken it: they fight.

He says that what surprises him most is to see how eager people are to dishonour others. I have not the honour of knowing her. I know she is rich, she is clever, she bears a good name. I have no positive knowledge whether she is guilty or no. But it gives me a supreme contempt for people who are in such a hurry to believe it. One must have poor morals if one believes so quickly in the dishonesty of others. And he fights, at the Count de Guerrai's. Madame de Montbrillant sends every day to inquire after him. Show the impression made on the husband, mother and all the family.

126. Give the name of Chevalier to Volx.

Desbarres tries to depreciate Volx's services—it has merely made a devil of a fuss.

125. Describe the rôle of René, who takes these people to represent a cavern of thieves.

He wrote a novel upon public rumours, on the injustice of reputations. This work was given without the author's name—made a great impression. René? or Volx? Then René names himself, the impression is destroyed. With a great deal of talent he cannot endure that others should have any.

These notes refer back to the 125th and 126th cahiers which have been replaced by the 114th and 115th cahiers of the Archives MS. But portions of the old cahiers, numbered still as in the references (125 and 126) are fastened on to the new ones.

The story of the duel is in the 115th cahier, entirely re-written. The story begins with a letter to the heroine from de Formeuse, alleged to be in retirement from society on account of his wife's recent death. This is suppressed by Brunet, who knew that whereas Madame de Julli died in 1752, Madame de Francueil died in 1754.

Quotation from 115*th Cahier MS.* "M. Volx was dining with the Comte de Guerrai, with whom he lives. There were a good many guests: but no women. About the middle of dinner, some one related my[1] adventure: and represented it as a clever trick on my part, all the sharper because I had contrived to cover my dexterity with the veil of friendship and devotion: they said, too, that my husband had paid me a hundred louis, as a reward for the service I had done him. M. Volx attempted to defend me, by pointing out the reputation for integrity and disinterestedness universally accorded me.

[2] "'*I have not the honour of knowing her intimately*,' he said: '*but she is said to be well off, she is clever:* people say she does a great deal of good: and that she is noble and generous. You will not persuade me that in twenty-four hours people change their characters and principles: and sacrifice all the advantages of a good reputation for such contemptible motives. Admitting even that such a thing were possible, what advantage, gentlemen, could she derive from it? A hundred louis, you say: and nothing more: for you know that her interests and her husband's are distinct. No, gentlemen, no! I don't believe a word of it: and I will not believe it.'

"In spite of this, the scandal was found amusing: and the general opinion was that I had known very well what I was doing when I burnt Madame de Ménil's papers, and that as I had shared in her intrigues perhaps more reasons than one could be found for my conduct. . . .

"At length, M. Volx, thoroughly exasperated, rose from his seat, and said—

"'Gentlemen, for my part I do not permit myself to to judge off-hand when I do not know the facts of the case. But of what use is it to have been honest through-

[1] Madame de Montbrillant is the speaker.

[2] "J'ai peu l'honneur de la connaître. Je sais qu'elle est riche, elle a de l'esprit." (Note, p. 71.)

out one's life, if this honesty cannot protect one from suspicions and calumny? . . I cannot tell what conduct you would have towards me in these circumstances: but I assure you, gentlemen, that if to-morrow any one of you were accused of a dishonourable action, I would not believe it.'

"'Parbleu! I should hope not, of one of us,' said a guest—'but these people are a bad lot.'

"'Who says that?' asked M. Volx;—'Gentlemen, I repeat it: *I do not know M. and Madame de Montbrillant intimately,*[1] *and I cannot positively say if they are guilty or no: but upon my faith it gives me a supreme contempt for those who are in such a hurry to believe it.*'

"The Baron d'Elva, who was the only person who had spoken affirmatively, rose also: and said that one must have a furiously good opinion of one's self, to venture to express one's contempt for others. *M. Volx replied that one must have very little honour of one's own, to need to believe so quickly in the dishonesty of others.*[2]

"It would seem that the reproach struck home: for the Baron d'Elva took it to himself. Some other observations were exchanged: the Comte de Guerrai tried at first to change the conversation, but the Baron insisted that he had been personally insulted: and these gentlemen left the quarrel where it stood. The two antagonists went down into the garden to fight. M. Volx gave his adversary a thrust that wounded him slightly in the side, and he himself received a wound in the arm. The Baron, who thought himself seriously hurt, said he was satisfied. Volx threw away his sword and helped to staunch his adversary's wound before thinking of his own."

[1] "Je ne sais si elle est coupable ou non, mais, ma foi, cela me donne un souverain mépris pour ceux qui sont si pressés à croire." (Note, p. 71.)

[2] "Il faut avoir peu de mœurs pour avoir besoin de déshonorer les autres." (Note, *idem.*)

We have now the story of the different behaviour of René, which if it leaves Madame de Montbrillant unenlightened, commences to arouse the suspicions of her guardian, who is supposed to relate the incident.

Archives Cahier 115; Brunet's MS., vol. vi. p. 24.

"Eight or ten days after M. Volx's duel a sort of little novel was published, both agreeably and powerfully written, about public reports and the injustice of founding evil reputations upon them. The author of the book remained unknown: but it could be attributed to only a small number of people. This work made a great sensation. However it may have been, and whether it were the novel which converted people or that they had grown tired of discussing Madame de Montbrillant, what is certain is that from the time of the appearance of the book, she was not spoken of, unless it were to pity her, and then to speak of her with praise. Desbarres thought he had made a clever discovery by attributing this novel to Volx. He had fought for Madame de Montbrillant: it was then only natural to suppose that he had written in her honour. He protested vainly that he had no part in this publication. Desbarres, delighted with his own theory, published it everywhere. But soon René proclaimed himself the true author, and the friendship he professed for Madame de Montbrillant rendered his opinions and his work of no authority: and hence destroyed a great portion of the effect it had produced upon the public. Madame de Montbrillant herself showed René how warmly sensible she was of the friendly motives which had led him to write indirectly in her favour. I could not, however, prevent myself from saying to René, that I was surprised that when he had succeeded so well in his objects, he should have destroyed the good work he had done by declaring himself. He replied that he could not endure that other people's books should be attributed to him or that his own works should be attributed to others.

"'I should not care to adopt the greater number of those given me: and I do not esteem my own worthy to be called by the name of any one else.' I remember that I then said to Madame de Montbrillant that I was not the dupe of this sham modesty, and that I suspected that, possessed of a great deal of talent himself, he did not like to recognize any in other people."

The negative evidence that Madame d'Epinay did not in her first account give the story of Grimm's duel, is not the only reason for dismissing this improbable combat as a pure invention. Attention to dates proves to us that the impression supposed to have been produced by it, would have only manifested itself after a period of two years: for the *liaison* between Grimm and Madame d'Epinay commenced after the death of the Comte de Friesen, in March 1755. In 1753 the affections both of Grimm and of Madame d'Epinay were preoccupied—Madame d'Epinay was on the eve of presenting M. de Francueil with the son destined, notwithstanding his illegitimacy, to become the dignitary of the Church described by George Sand as "mon oncle par bâtardise." Grimm, on his side, interesting the public in the character of the heart-stricken lover of the opera singer, Mlle. Fel, was kept alive only by the ministrations of the devoted Abbé Roynal and Jean Jacques. It would certainly have disturbed the effect made, had this despairing lover been known to have undertaken a duel in championship of another lady: and this consideration would infallibly have held back Grimm from declaring himself, at that time, Madame d'Epinay's champion.

There is, then, no reason for supposing that it was by virtue of his own good sword used against the scandal-loving Baron d'Elva, that Grimm arrived at being called by Madame d'Epinay her "chevalier": and that being her "knight," he conquered, also by his superiority of character and stern righteousness, the privilege of becoming more than a lover, her moral reformer; and her

deliverer from the baneful influences of her earlier friends, and especially of Jean Jacques Rousseau. This, again, is a legend handed down by the *Memoirs:* where the severe and scrupulous Volx represents, quite as much as the impostor René, a mythical personage, whom admirers of this work have accepted literally.

Another assertion, accepted without any examination into its correctness, is the one that care for Madame d'Epinay's morals, and for her good name, justified Grimm's "firmness," as it is called, when compelling her to turn Jean Jacques, in mid-winter, out of the Hermitage she had built for him: and to break off in anger their long and affectionate friendship.

If we attend to facts, we shall find that neither Madame d'Epinay's morals nor her good name suffered in any way from her friendship with Rousseau. But that, on the contrary, this friendship was her chief title to respect amongst her contemporaries. Thus we find her writing from Geneva to Grimm, in November 1757, before the story of the quarrel had spread, and when Jean Jacques was still at his Hermitage. "The people here hold me in veneration on account of Rousseau: I had to receive to-day a deputation of clockmakers who wished to thank me for my kindness to him."

In 1763, when M. d'Epinay and M. de la Poplinière were dismissed from their posts as farmer-generals, on account of their extravagance, the *Mémoires* of Bachaumont, when recording the event mentions, by way of claiming sympathy for Madame d'Epinay in this misfortune, that she was honourably known to the public as "having been for several years the hostess of the Citizen of Geneva."

On the other hand, it is not quite easy to discover how Grimm served Madame d'Epinay's morals, or her reputation, by making her his mistress: and by arrogantly publishing the fact to the world in his insolent behaviour to the intimate friends (Desmahis and Duclos amongst others) who belonged to the agreeable society she enter-

tained at La Chevrette, in the period she described herself as *Mes Moments Heureux;* that is to say, in the period before Grimm's tyranny had commenced.

In the Arsenal Notes, we read:

175. "Show in a conversation with Volx at Geneva that she is a new woman. Paint Paris: and the conduct she is to have in the future. Discard all love letters and expressions of passion—these should show esteem and confidence. 143. Dans les lettres d'Emilie un peu le ton de pupille et cette confiance illimitée qui fait tout dire, bien, mal, intéressant ou indifférent."

In the re-written cahiers where these instructions are carried out,[1] we find the effort made to paint Madame de Montbrillant as a "new woman"; and we have Volx, in the character of a moral reformer, writing such wearisome epistles as the following:

"You see, my dear friend, that what you describe as your past follies should render your present state more precious to you. Everything now announces an improved future. You, who can now every night testify to yourself that you deserve the homage you receive from the honest people who surround you, with all the honesty you possess, and your cleverness, fortified against the poison of wicked and frivolous friends, what woman in the world should become more estimable and happier than you may be?"

We are glad, from this evidence of the manuscript, to be sure that the real Madame d'Epinay had not to endure these lectures.

Here from the old cahier 162 is the letter replaced in the new cahier 160 by the one quoted from:

"I write to tell thee, my Emilie, that I cannot accustom myself to the privation of thy presence and of the tender effusions of heart I share with thee! Ah, why cannot I pass my life in thine arms, in the bosom of happiness? In imagination, I approach gently the

[1] See Note D, and comparison between old cahier 142 and new cahier 137, vol. i. p. 137.

couch of my Emily: but I dare not embrace her: she sleeps too peacefully; I will establish myself near, as the guardian of her slumbers. Oh, too sweet and vain illusion!" . . .

It is not a *chef-d'œuvre* of amatory eloquence: but at any rate it is well meant. And Madame d'Epinay's philosophy and kind-heartedness would lead her to judge Grimm's billet-doux by the intention. But one feels quite sure that she was no "new woman," and that with all her amiability, the real Madame d'Epinay would not have endured the sermons of the reformer.

But what reason is there for believing that modern critics are justified in forming their opinion of Grimm from the impression produced upon them by the portrait of Volx in the *Memoirs?*

It has to be realized that here, too, until comparatively recently, judgments of Grimm depended upon the critics' reliance either upon Rousseau, or else upon Madame d'Epinay: because the personage described by A. A. Barbier as one of the "great men of the eighteenth century" was so little recognized in his own day that in 1791 Ginguené, when criticizing the *Confessions*, said of him "that he had only become famous through Rousseau's *Confessions.*"

We have this fact also stated by E. Scherer in his biographical study of Grimm:

"Grimm's fame," writes M. Scherer, "came late. With the exception of two celebrated works,[1] in which he appeared associated with events of a private and personal character, his name holds very little place in the memoirs and correspondence of the epoch. Voltaire, who supposed him to have been a Bohemian of race, only knew him late in the day, and in Switzerland. Marmontel had been a guest at the bachelor dinners given by the young secretary of the Count de Friesen, but he only mentions them. From the gallery of portraits that adorns his memoirs, Grimm is absent. In the

[1] The *Confessions* and the *Memoirs.*

memoirs of the Abbé Morellet there is the same silence about Grimm; all the more unexpected in a friend of Diderot's, a partisan of Italian music, and a constant guest in literary salons. Morellet only mentions Grimm once, as having seen him at the Friday afternoons of Madame Necker, and he forgets him in the list of the men of letters whose acquaintanceship he had made at the house of the Baron d'Holbach. And the reason is not difficult to find. Grimm's value as a writer, and his literary reputation to-day, are founded upon a correspondence that was intended to be kept a secret; and that remained one until 1812. One understands then what happened. *The Grimm we know escaped the notice of his contemporaries.* His celebrity was a posthumous one. Let us add that, even for us, his personality continued indistinct. For a long time he was neglected in the researches made to discover interesting personages in the period when he lived. No important study was dedicated to him except two articles by Sainte-Beuve in 1853,[1] articles of great value, as are all of those by the same pen, but in which the critic confined himself exclusively to a literary judgment of his precursor. The fact is, information was wanting. A sort of anonymity continued to cover this personage. *One had said everything one knew about him when one had summed up the stories told by his enemy and by his mistress:* as for the Correspondence, no one was in a mood to undertake either a rigorous analysis of these numerous volumes, or the complete examination of them; without which it was impossible to appreciate the thinker, the critic, the writer, and under all these aspects, to discover the man."

Nothing can more exactly represent the situation than the last sentences. Critics would not take the trouble to really study Grimm's *Literary Correspondence:* and no other information about his personality lay open to them but two directly opposite accounts, the one given in the *Memoirs*, the other in the *Confes-*

[1] See page 54, vol. i.

sions. But E. Scherer is not so exact when he says that Sainte-Beuve, recognizing this situation, confined himself exclusively to a literary judgment of his precursor. It has been seen that, on the contrary, the author of the *Causeries* gave his readers his conviction "that, between these two painters of Grimm, Rousseau was a liar," and the author of the *Memoirs* a painter from the life. "*Grimm*," wrote Sainte-Beuve, "*as he appears to me through the description given* by his friend,[1] is a just, upright, firm man, formed early to face the world, having small esteem for mankind as a whole, judging their characters; having none of the false views and philanthropic illusions of the time. Let us beware of judging him by Rousseau's testimony: Jean Jacques never forgave Grimm for having at a glance penetrated him and his incurable vanity."

In the same way, Grimm appears to Mr. Morley (and most probably as a result of the description given by Sainte-Beuve) "judicious, collected, self-seeking, coldly upright." "He had that firmness and positivity," writes Mr. Morley,[2] "which are not always beautiful but of which there is probably too little rather than too much in the world, certainly in the France of his time, and of which there was nothing at all in Rousseau. Above all things, he hated declamation. It is easy to conceive how Rousseau's way of ordering himself would estrange so hard a head as this."

The "hard-headed, coldly upright, sternly righteous" Grimm of modern critics is a mythical personage created in the image of Volx of the *Memoirs*, in the same way that the sophist and impostor Jean Jacques is a mythical personage created in the image of René. Let us see whether the mythical Grimm of the legend can survive exposure to the light of historical evidence.

The sources of new information about Grimm explored by E. Scherer are his private letters to Catherine of Russia, published in 1878 by the Imperial Historical

[1] Madame d'Epinay. [2] *Rousseau*, vol. i., chap. vii. p. 280.

Society of Russia; and his private correspondence with Louise Dorothée Duchesse of Saxe-Gotha, discovered and printed by M. Maurice Tourneux in the sixteenth volume of his admirable edition of the *Correspondance Littéraire*.

We may accept M. Scherer's appreciation of the leading characteristics of Grimm's personality revealed in the documents where neither Rousseau nor Madame d'Epinay had anything to say; these leading characteristics are, *not* positivity, integrity and hatred of declamation—they are "flexibility of mind (la curiosité d'esprit), and want of measure and delicacy in flattery." Now flexibility, and intellectual curiosity are excellent qualities in a critic: but they are not qualities which prove him innocent of deceit when he entirely misrepresents the ideas and methods of an eloquent writer whom personally he detests.

As for the other leading characteristic of want of measure and delicacy in flattery, we may quote some instances of it, in order to decide whether hatred of declamation, integrity, and righteousness actually were the causes of Grimm's natural antipathy to the prophet of sincerity, independence and simple life, Jean Jacques Rousseau.

One of Grimm's first patronesses amongst royal personages was Louise Dorothée, Duchess of Saxe-Gotha. In 1759 he seized the opportunity of a journey professedly undertaken to console the Marshal de Castries in an illness, to establish personal relationship with his patroness; and henceforth, independently of the Literary Correspondence, he kept up a private commerce of letters with the Duchess. Grimm's letters discovered by M. Maurice Tourneux in the Archives of Saxe-Gotha, where the last editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* found the manuscript after which his fine edition was made, are very interesting to us; not only because they exhibit Grimm in his character of a flatterer "without tact or measure," but also because they show us that he had

received from his patroness, and on more occasions than one, warning that his methods of treating Rousseau in the *Correspondance* were displeasing to her: and would very likely offend Frederic.

"I recognize the goodness of my 'Divine Sovereign,'" wrote Grimm, on the 1st May, 1768, "in all she says about Jean Jacques Rousseau, and I receive her declaration as the most flattering mark of her esteem. Alas, no need to urge me to frankness, I who for eleven years have exercised the difficult task of expressing my judgment, rightly or wrongly, before the most enlightened princess in the world, and who, bound by the obligations of haste unavoidable with periodical work, am obliged to give my impressions without deliberately weighing them; I, in short, from whose hand the pen would fall immediately, if your highness did not grant me the indulgence I stand in need of. The favour with which your highness honours the works of my old friend Jean Jacques should be a special reason for rendering me timid and cautious: but I have the presumption to believe that if I could explain myself at length upon this subject in the same room where once I sat at the feet of your highness, where I would always wish to be, perhaps my ideas would be found more in accordance with those of the one whom I adore than she now believes. For certainly I do not dispute the talent of the most eloquent writer, the most seductive pen, of the century; nor am I astonished at the prodigious impression these talents have made on a number of the most enlightened people. It is perhaps a fault in me that Rousseau does not please me. But the reason is, that I only love a philosopher who writes in good faith; deceit and subtlety are insufferable to me, either in people or in books. Here, Madame, you have my confession of faith: which I depose at the altar of goodness and wisdom, which has become flesh, like the Word, and we have seen it, and its image is always present with us; if St. John does not put it this way, I do."

On other occasions this "honest man," who discovers subtlety and deceit in Rousseau, "*embraces the feet of his divine Sovereign as the ancients embraced the altars of propitious divinities;*" on her birthday he transforms his chamber into a chapel where he celebrates the worship of the being he adores. Her letters he receives with "*the blissful shudder* that precedes the most delightful sensations," etc., etc.

Through the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, Grimm endeavoured to arrive at the favour of Frederic, who throughout showed himself contemptuous of the personality of the obsequious editor. His paper he deigned to receive, but, as Grimm pathetically complained, forgot to pay for. In his correspondence with the Duchess, Louise Dorothée, Frederic shows his impatience at the flatteries dealt out to him by Grimm, and makes it a condition that he shall be spared them in future.

"The periodical journal you deign to send me," he writes to the Duchess, "is well written. I know the author by reputation. He wrote *Le Petit Prophète*, and is a clever fellow, who has formed his mind in Paris. But if he wishes to go on sending me his papers, do, for mercy's sake, beg him to spare me his compliments."

Grimm does not seem to have taken the hint, but Frederic continued to receive his paper, until, in 1767 (probably as a result of the circulation of the false letter about Rousseau attributed to the "King of Prussia") he declines to remain a subscriber. The following year, however, the editor went in person to solicit *Marcus Aurelius—Trajan—Julien—Frederic*—as he calls his more illustrious than generous patron, to renew his subscription. Frederic consented to receive the *Correspondance Littéraire* again, but it does not appear that he ever paid for it.

"Unfortunately for Grimm," wrote E. Scherer, "this Marcus Aurelius—Trajan—Julien—Frederic" of his, had too much wit to taste this style of praise; and too little indulgence not to make sport of the author. He calls

him M. de la Grimmalière. And when Catherine gives him the honorary title of Russian Colonel, says mockingly that he had yet to hear of his military exploits. . . . But the more our distinguished flunkey is honoured by the royal pleasantries, the more gratified he is. He called himself already the 'drudge'[1] of Catherine; he is only too happy to become the 'butt'[2] of Frederic's humour."

But it is especially in his private correspondence with Catherine that one is able to convince one's self how very far from the truth are those critics who conceive that sobriety, integrity, and hatred of declamation were the qualities in Grimm which constituted the "radical incompatibility" between himself and Rousseau.

"Grimm suffers," his biographer E. Scherer admits, "from the revelation of his miserable abjectness as a flatterer of Catherine. His humility becomes baseness and his flattery extravagance. Grimm asks to be counted in the number of the dogs belonging to the Empress. He is only an earth-worm and he is glad of it. 'I am all the more fit,' he says, 'to crawl at her feet.' There are two styles this gross flattery affects: the description of the religious worship he pays Catherine, and of the emotions which her favours cause him to experience.'

The Empress has a chapel in the hotel of the Chaussée d'Antin,[3] where she receives from the whole family religious homage; the principal dates in her life—her birth, her accession to the throne, her coronation, etc., are celebrated by festivals. Everything that emanates from her excites transports of gratitude and cries of admiration. When he has just received the portrait of his Sovereign—"the revered image," he writes, "has been received with the same ceremonies and the same devotion with which Count Louvarez celebrated the reception of the order of Saint André. Except that I did not

[1] Le souffre douleur. [2] Le plastron.

[3] The Duchess of Saxe-Gotha once enjoyed the same privilege.

communicate, I may boast to have laughed, wept, and had as he had the appearance of a man beside himself.

"It is, however, impossible that the reception of the order can have caused him the same sort of joy and gratitude that the venerated image has caused me—for I am exhausted, annihilated! Why, oh why, did not I communicate, and in the two elements, as he did before touching the revered image? This pious act might perhaps have given me the strength to support my joy, and not to fall crushed by the weight of my gratitude! Blessed be she, full of grace, who has deigned to accord her drudge this priceless image of the immortal one."

"Not a letter from the Empress," writes E. Scherer, "that does not call forth these dithyrambics. Grimm, when he has received one of these epistles, 'weeps,' by his own account, 'like a calf.' 'The earthquake of Lisbon is a game of marionettes, when compared with the agitation of his transports,' etc."

In order to discover where, as a matter of fact, lay the radical incompatibility of character between the "drudge" of Catherine, and the well-satisfied "butt" of Frederic's mockeries, and J. J. Rousseau, and especially where the causes of the bitter hatred of the flatterer without tact or measure for the eloquent prophet of sincerity in speech and life, stand patiently revealed, let us consider, in comparison with Grimm's rapturous letters, Jean Jacques' reply to the King of Poland, who had in a most friendly and even respectful way, attacked the First *Discourse*.

"I ought perhaps," wrote Rousseau, "to commence by thanking rather than by replying to the author who has honoured my *Discourse* by answering it? But what I owe to gratitude shall never make me forget my first debt to truth: nor shall I forget either that on all questions where truth and reason are concerned, men return to natural conditions and recover their original equality. The author of this work commences by some personalities that I will refer to only in so

far as they affect the question. He honours me with praises, and here he opens to me a field where I might easily out-do him ; but between us there is here, too, little just proportion, and a respectful silence about the objects of our admiration is often more becoming than indiscreet praise."

In a note, Rousseau adds :

"All princes, be they good or bad, will always be either basely or insincerely praised, whilst courtiers and men of letters exist. As for those princes who are great men, their praises must be more moderately given and better chosen. Flattery offends their virtue, and praise may even injure their glory. I know that in my eyes Trajan would be a grander figure if Pliny had not written about him. Had Alexander really been what he wished to appear, he would not have thought about his own portrait or statue ; and he would only have allowed a Lacedemonian to deliver his panegyric, at the risk of missing one altogether. The only praise worthy of a great king is the praise he receives, not from the mouth of mercenary orators, but from the voice of a free people. 'In order that your praises should please me,' said Julien, 'I should need to know that, if I deserved it, you would dare to say the opposite.'"

The purpose of this criticism, it has been often said, is historical and not psychological—to establish the facts of the conspiracy against Rousseau, not to examine the motives of the conspirators. At the same time, it may be said that for subtle students of human character, the old problem of Rousseau's perplexing personality, which remained insoluble because it presented to us the task of reconciling essential differences, is now replaced by the problem of Grimm's hatred, in Rousseau, of a man who had never injured him and who did not cross his path ; a problem capable of solution by psychologists who study in him the exasperation, and in the end the virulent hatred, set up in a self-concentrated worldly mind (where imagination took the

form of abject idolatry of rank and slavish respect for conventions) by an unworldly man of genius, for whom rank and conventions were illusions; and who endeavoured to see the laws of character, and the purposes of life, as "in themselves they really were."

PART V

THE *CORRESPONDANCE LITTÉRAIRE*

As The Second Instrument of the Conspiracy

Madame de Warens at Fifty
(From a medallion in the Museum of the Hôtel de Cluny, Paris.)
Died 1762

[*To face page* 91.

THE 'CORRESPONDANCE LITTÉRAIRE'

THE CAMPAIGN OF CALUMNY FROM JUNE 1762 TO MAY 1767

GRIMM'S *Literary Correspondence* has now to be examined, in order to establish the assertion that this secret journal was made to serve the purpose of the plot to create a false reputation for Rousseau amongst his contemporaries; and to stir up against him enemies and persecutions in all the countries of Europe where his works had made him famous.

The employment of Grimm's journal as the instrument of this conspiracy can, it has already been said, be most convincingly studied in the period when the author of *Emile* was actively persecuted by the French and Swiss Governments; that is to say, in an epoch when calumnies about his character, and false reports of his book, were calculated especially to injure him, to rob him of protectors, and quite possibly to imperil his liberty and even his life.

Before entering upon the study of this campaign of calumny, it will be well to clearly recognize the circumstances of the man secretly attacked.

When, in May 1762, *Emile* was published, Rousseau was living at Montmorency, in the little house that may still be seen there, where he had taken up his abode in December 1757, when dismissed by Madame d'Epinay from the Hermitage. In 1758 had appeared the *Lettre à d'Alembert;* and, in 1759, the publication of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* had made its author the most famous and best-loved writer in France. All this had not soothed the enmity towards him of the Encyclopædists; and the enthusiastic friendship and admiration professed for

him by the Duke and Duchess of Luxembourg, amongst the greatest people in the land, had not helped the impression Grimm and Diderot had intended should be produced by their repudiation of Jean Jacques, as undeserving of the notice of honest men.

With all these enemies amongst men of letters, Rousseau had committed an imprudence, by leaving an open door to any censor on the alert, in the method of producing *Émile*. All his earlier works had been printed in Holland, and only introduced into France after they had passed the censorship. Acting, however, upon the recommendations of the Duchess of Luxembourg and of Malesherbe who at the time held the post of Président de la Librairie, in other words, of public censor, Rousseau had consented to allow his *Émile* to be printed in France. It was denounced immediately after publication to the Parliament of Paris as an irreligious work ; and on the 9th June, 1757, the Parliament issued a decree condemning the book to be burnt by the public executioner, and the author, if found upon French territory, to immediate arrest. The Prince de Conti, warned in time, sent down word to Montmorency on the night of the 8th June, warning Rousseau that the decree would be issued next day, and that he had better escape before it was served upon him.

There can be little doubt that Rousseau's best plan would have been to undergo the arrest, and sentence, that would probably have meant a short term of imprisonment. But against his better judgment (and certainly against his own interests) Rousseau let himself be persuaded by the Duchess de Boufflers, that he owed it to the Maréchale de Luxembourg and the President de Malesherbes to avoid arrest—and with it the inevitable disclosure that the prohibited book had been printed in France in accordance with arrangements made, not by the author, but by these highly-placed personages.

Quitting Montmorency on the 9th, and travelling by post-chaise (all precautions had been taken by the Prince

de Conti to secure his safety in the journey, from the moment that he consented to leave France), Rousseau reached Yverdun in the canton of Berne on the 14th June. He believed himself perfectly secure in Switzerland. But four days after his arrival, he heard that *Emile* had been condemned to be burnt also by the Council of Geneva, and that he was also to be arrested if he returned to his native city.

On the 9th July, 1762, that is to say, when he had been less than a month at Yverdun, he was informed that, on the following day, the Senate of Berne would issue a decree against him banishing him from their estates. In order to be beforehand with the order, Rousseau left Yverdun the same day, and reached Motiers Travers on the 11th July. Motiers, in the province of Neuchatel, was Prussian territory. Immediately on his arrival, Rousseau wrote to the Governor of Neuchatel, Lord-Mareschal Keith, asking whether or no Frederic would grant him a refuge.

"My Lord," he wrote, "a poor author, proscribed in France, in his native city, and in the canton of Berne, for having said what he thought useful and true, seeks a refuge in the states of your king. Do not grant it me if I am a guilty man; I do not ask for grace. But if I am only an oppressed man, it would be worthy of yourself and the king not to refuse me fire and water, that elsewhere is denied me."

The Governor of Neuchatel replied immediately.

Colombier, 12th July, 1762.

"Sir, I have written to the king for his orders about your retreat in this country. In the meanwhile, live in perfect security. I should be very glad to be able to do you any pleasure, or to render you any service, for I admire your talents and I respect your virtues. . . ."

On the 16th August Lord-Mareschal Keith wrote again :—

"Sir, I have received the reply of the king, and he is very glad to give a refuge to persecuted virtue."

A sentence in this letter is worth quoting in proof of the fact that Grimm's mischievous hint to Voltaire had taken effect, and also by way of proof that Rousseau did not imagine the influences that were used to stir up enmities against him in his native city. "I have just had a visit," wrote Lord Mareschal, "from a minister who is a great admirer of you and of your book. I have been shown a letter from Berne which accuses Voltaire of having stirred up the vexatious measures against you at Geneva; and if the letter speaks the truth they are now sorry for it, and angry with the poet." [1]

We are now able to understand Rousseau's situation, and the effect calculated to have upon it, of the "kind of biography" of the proscribed author, secretly circulated by the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire*, six days after the Parliament of Paris had sent out its decree.

[1] See Lettres de Milord Maréchal. Streckeisen-Moultou, vol. ii. p. 64.

CHAPTER I

FIRST ACT

Correspondance Littéraire, 15th June, 1762

"The storm, which had been gathering ever since the appearance of M. Rousseau's book upon education, has now broken. At the demand of the public prosecutor, the Parliament of Paris has decreed the arrest of the author, and condemned the book to the fire. This sentence was given on the 9th of this month, and M. Rousseau fled on the night of the 8th. It is supposed that he has taken the road to Switzerland.

"This writer, famous for his eloquence and eccentricity, lived at three leagues from Paris, in a little town once called Montmorency, but now called Enghien, because it is the capital of the duchy of this name, belonging to the house of Condé. . . Near the small town of Montmorency is a castle which belongs, I believe, to the Duchess of Choiseul; but the life-rental of it has been bought by the Marshal and Duke of Luxembourg. During the four years that Jean Jacques Rousseau had resided in this part of the country, he had occupied sometimes a little house in the town, sometimes an apartment in the château. He had left *all his old friends; amongst whom I shared the most intimate place with the philosopher Diderot; and had replaced us by people of the highest rank. I shall not attempt to decide if he lost or gained by this exchange;* but I believe he was as happy at Montmorency as a man so full of bile and vanity could contrive to be. *In the society of his friends he had found friendship and esteem; but the reputation, and more especially the superiority of talent, that he was forced to recognize in some of them, possibly rendered their*

companionship painful to him: whilst at Montmorency, he enjoyed, without rivalry, the flattery of the most distinguished and greatest people in the kingdom, to say nothing of a crowd of amiable women, who paid him court. The rôle of an eccentric is always a success, in the case of a man who has the patience and courage to sustain the part. *Jean Jacques Rousseau had spent all his previous life in running down great people: but now he professed that he had found virtue and friendship nowhere but amongst them.* Both these extremes were equally philosophic. Whilst amused by his prejudices, I used often to laugh at him. He had an ugly dog which he called Duke, because he said it was snappish and small like a Duke. When he was at the Château of Montmorency he changed the name from Duke to Turk. *This disguise had something cowardly about it,* it would have been worthier of the rôle taken up by the citizen of Geneva to leave the dog his name as a memento of an unjust prejudice once held by his master. Thus he might even have turned it into a tribute to M. de Luxembourg, by saying to him—'you have taught me to know what a duke really is; and have put right my false notions about men at court.' It is hard to believe that people are really indifferent to high rank, if they make too much fuss about it. The true philosopher, whilst showing respect to rank, can forget it. Esteem is due to personal qualities; and let Jean Jacques say what he will, it is not inconceivable that one may be a prince, and yet have great virtues. I sometimes took pleasure in using his own weapons against himself. One day, he related to us, with a triumphant air, that when leaving the opera on the day of the first representation of the *Devin du Village*, the Duke des Deux Ponts[1] had come up to him with the greatest politeness saying, 'Will you allow me, sir, to pay you a compliment?' and that he had replied, 'By all means; if it be a very short one.'

[1] It should not be overlooked that the Dowager Duchess des Deux Ponts was one of Grimm's *abonnés*.

When he said this, every one was silent. At length, I took it up, and said, laughingly, 'Illustrious citizen and co-sovereign of Geneva, inasmuch as there resides in you a particle of the sovereignty of the republic, permit me to call your attention to the fact that in spite of the severity of your principles, you cannot refuse to a reigning prince the same respect due to a water carrier; and that if to a civil speech from such a person, you had replied with such roughness and brutality, you would have had reason to reproach yourself with a piece of unjustifiable impertinence.' Since those days, and at the Château of Montmorency, he has said as much evil of the philosophers as he used to say of great people: but I don't know whether the great people have, in their turn, taken up the cudgels for the philosophers?

"M. Rousseau has been unhappy nearly all his life. He had reason to complain of fate: and instead, he complained of men. This injustice is common enough in people who, to timidity of character, join superlative pride. They suffer when seeing that their neighbours are more fortunate than they are; without realizing that if their neighbours were unfortunate, it would not help their own case. People of this sort flatter those whom they have dealings with, but comfort their spleen by abusing the human race. . . One of the chief misfortunes of M. Rousseau is to have reached forty years of age before discovering his own talent. In his youth he learnt for some time the trade of an engraver. *His father having had the misfortune to kill a man, had to fly from Geneva* (*where he worked at watchmaking*), *and abandoned his children.* Jean Jacques was given a home by a woman of rank in Savoy called M. la Baronne de Warens. She made him abjure the Protestant religion and took care of his education. This woman was possessed by tastes for alchemy, which ruined her: she is alive, I believe; but in absolute poverty. Destiny, I know not how, led M. Rousseau to Paris; and there he attached himself to M. de Montaign, who having been

nominated ambassador at Venice took Rousseau with him as his secretary. My lord the ambassador passes for nothing less than a man of intelligence; he saw none in his secretary: and to-day is full of astonishment at the reputation M. Rousseau has made for himself with his writings. These two men had nothing in common to keep them together: they soon separated; each profoundly dissatisfied with the other. *M. Rousseau returned to Paris, penniless, unknown, ignorant of his own talents; seeking in frightful straits for some means to escape from dying of hunger.* At this time, his sole occupations were music and poetry. He published a dissertation on a method he had imagined for expressing musical notes by numbers. *This method had no success and his dissertation was read by no one.* He afterwards wrote the words and music of an opera which he called *Les Muses Galantes*, and could never get it represented. On this occasion he had many quarrels with Rameau; and took it seriously to heart that he could not get his opera performed. *In this epoch, he occupied himself also with a machine by the aid of which he hoped to learn to fly; he merely succeeded in making attempts, which did not succeed: but he was never cured sufficiently of this notion to allow his project to be treated as a chimera. Thus his friends who have such faith in him, may one day yet see him soaring in the air.* In the midst of all these failures he finally attached himself in the capacity of secretary and literary assistant to the wife of a farmer-general, once famous for her beauty. *The humiliations and restraints he endured in this position contributed not a little to embitter his character.*

"The philosopher Diderot, with whom at this time he became intimate, was the first who opened his eyes to his own talents; and the Academy of Dijon having proposed the famous question of the influence of letters upon morals, M. Rousseau treated the subject in a Discourse that was the starting-point of his reputation;

and of the rôle of eccentricity which since then he has adopted. *Up to this date he had been fond of compliments, gallant, with honeyed manners, that became tiresome by excess of politeness: suddenly he assumed the mantle of a cynic, and having nothing natural in his character, he threw himself to the other extreme. But when pouring forth sarcasms, he knew how to make exceptions in favour of those with whom he lived; and he kept still, with all his brusqueness and affected cynicism, a good deal of his old art of paying elaborate compliments, especially in his dealings with women.*

"When assuming the livery of a philosopher, he quitted the service of Madame Dupin; *and made himself a copyist of music; professing to exercise this trade like any simple workman, and to earn by it his bread: for one of his follies was to speak evil of the trade of an author; and to follow no other himself.* I advised him at this time to make himself a limonadier; and to set up a café in the square of the Palais Royal. This idea amused us for a long time. It was no more extravagant than many of his own: and it had the advantage of being gay, and of promising him an honest fortune. All Paris would have desired to see the café of Jean Jacques Rousseau, which would have become the meeting-place of every one famous in letters. But this folly having a practical side to it, was too sensible to be adopted by the citizen of Geneva.

"He went to pay his country a visit; and returned discontented at the end of six weeks. He re-abjured, during his stay at Geneva, the Roman faith; and re-made himself a Protestant. Upon his return, he passed two or three years in the society of his friends, as happy as it belonged to him to be, making books, and making believe to copy music; but when he was well off, he could not possibly keep quiet. *Madame d'Epinay having in the Forest of Montmorency a small house belonging to her estate, he persecuted her for a long time in order to make her lend it to him: saying that*

it was no longer possible to him to live in this horrible Paris; and that henceforth only the woods and solitude could supply him with a refuge from men. Such a refuge suited no one less than the man with his hot head, and his melancholy and impetuous temperament. *He became a real savage; solitude turned his head more than ever and soured his temper until he became dissatisfied with himself and with all his friends. He came out of his forest at the end of six months, having quarrelled with mankind at large.*

"It was then that he established himself at Montmorency, where he has lived until now, with all the fame his talents and eccentricity brought him.

"Here are the principal epochs in the life of this celebrated writer. His private and domestic life would not make a less curious history; but it is written in the memory of two or three of his old friends, who from respect for themselves have written it nowhere else.

"*It is affirmed that he has passed the last few days in convulsions of despair and grief at the consequences of his work.* He believed himself secure from persecution on account of his relations with people of the highest rank. He could not believe that the Parliament would venture to attack him seriously. I understand him well enough to know that he will be inconsolable all his life to be no longer in a country whose faults and abuses he exaggerated constantly. It is said he has taken the road to Switzerland. *He will not go to Geneva, for one of his inconsequential acts is to praise his country to the skies, whilst secretly detesting her; and to love Paris passionately whilst overwhelming her with reprobation and abuse.*"[1]

It has been said that the date of the decree of the Council of Geneva was 18th June, 1762.

In the next issue of his secret journal, 1st July, 1762,[2]

[1] See *Correspondance Littéraire*, vol. v. p. 110; 1st July, 1762. 1st August, p. 139. 1st September, p. 148.

[2] *Corr. Litt.*, vol. v. p. 110.

the editor of the *Correspondance* gives, with the news of this fresh condemnation, a malicious notice of the condemned book, *Emile*. He has also his own comments to make upon the probable motives and proceedings of the author under sentence of arrest. In his first notice Grimm had affirmed that Rousseau would not seek a refuge in his native city, because he secretly detested her; in his second, he suggests this sower of mischief probably *will* go to Geneva now, with the purpose of defying her magistrates, and stirring up vexations for Voltaire;—in other words, Grimm *prepares an angry reception for Rousseau in his native city, in the event of his going there.*

"The Council of Geneva," wrote Grimm, "has ordered the *Contrat Social* and *Emile* to be burnt; and the author, should he present himself there, to be brought before the magistrates, and called upon to answer for his opinions. This proceeding may induce M. Rousseau to return to his native city. In a democracy he would be certain to find partisans; and to enter Geneva in defiance of the Council, would be more exciting than to go there if no one opposed it. He could probably make himself the leader of a popular party. Should such a combination come about, M. de Voltaire may find himself disturbed and annoyed even in his retreat at Les Délices."

In his professed criticism of the prohibited book, Grimm, not satisfied with entirely misrepresenting the author's expressed opinions,[1] attacks him personally, *as a plagiarist*, who has stolen from him, Grimm, the original conception of giving a treatise upon education

[1] The falsification of Rousseau's writings by Grimm and the effect his supposed criticism has had in creating the impression that the most lucid of writers is obcure in his meanings, or that his books teem with contradictions, will be dealt with later on. The purpose of the present account is to exhibit the secret activity of the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire*, during these five critical years, in the way of stirring up suspicions, enmities, and consequent persecutions for his old friend Jean Jacques.

in the form of a novel: and *as an impostor*, who has no belief in the doctrines he promulgates.

When stealing, by Grimm's account, his project, the plagiarist, however, had not known how to handle it properly.

"I should have taken good care," wrote the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire*, "not to call *my* treatise upon education by that name: nor should I have stamped it as a didactic work, by stuffing it with elaborate principles and methods. On the contrary, I should have done my best to hide the purpose of my work, under the simple interest of the narrative. M. Rousseau has felt bound to make his work a mixture: half a story, half a didactic treatise. *I venture to think that as I had conceived it, the book would have had more the air of a work of genius:* and in any case it would not have given the impression of pedantry, which disfigures the book of the Citizen of Geneva. This author has taken pleasure in contradicting in his treatise several of my ideas, which he knew, upon this important subject: but not in a manner that alters my views. The only leading idea of mine he has retained is the one of not speaking to his pupil of religion or of God before the age of reason: at fifteen years of age, my young man had never heard the name of God pronounced—assuredly he would never have taken that name in vain. . . . *M. Rousseau's great fault is his want of naturalness and truth; another even graver fault is his constant bad faith.* One may count upon it, that M. Rousseau is always right when most men are wrong, and always wrong when most men are right; *for he seeks less to speak the truth than to say and do differently to other people.*"

Rousseau had reached Motiers Travers on the 11th July, and it was on the 16th August only that the Governor of Neuchatel received Frederic's reply. On the 1st August, whilst the King's decision was pending, Grimm takes care he shall know that the author of

Emile has attacked him in his writings. Rousseau, as a matter of fact, had condemned Frederic as a promoter of wars: and had said of him: "he thinks as a philosopher but he acts as a king." Grimm's notice contained also the falsehood that Rousseau (who quitted Motiers before the sentence against him was served upon him) had appealed to the Senate for indulgence.

"The Council of Berne," wrote Grimm,[1] "has also condemned the works of the Citizen of Geneva and ordered the author to withdraw from the territory of the canton. *Vainly has M. Rousseau sent a petition to Berne: he was compelled to obey the decree and has taken shelter in the principality of Neuchatel. Here, then, he is under the protection of a prince whom he made a profession of hating because he happened to be the object of public admiration. There is in this very book a very indiscreet and very violent passage on this subject: but that will only be another reason for Frederic to respect the misfortunes of J. J. Rousseau and to protect a famous writer in spite of his own follies.*"

On the 1st September Grimm favours his *abonnés* with another criticism of *Emile*,[2] where one meets with the invariable affirmations about Rousseau's bad faith, lack of naturalness, extravagance; and the unphilosophical and unpractical character of his doctrine.

The commentary ends with a malicious personal thrust; in this case meant to support the baseless charge that Rousseau had behaved with ingratitude to his old friends.

"What I should also wish could be effaced from this book upon education," writes Grimm, "is the strange apology for the ungrateful. *M. Rousseau pretends that they do not exist. One cannot prevent oneself from thinking that an author must have his own reasons for palliating or excusing the most hideous of vices that has ever degraded human nature.* One day, Rémond de

[1] *Correspondance Littéraire*, vol. v. p. 139.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. v. p. 148.

Saint-Mard, known by some second-rate works and as very rich and very stingy, launched forth upon a long terrible attack upon the human race. The philosopher Diderot, who was present, stopped him in the middle of his speech: 'Where do you find all the evil you say of men?' he asks. 'In myself,' replied Rémond. At least, here was frankness."

Here is what Grimm describes as an apology for the ungrateful:—

"Ingratitude," wrote the author of *Emile*, "would be more rare if benefits on terms of usury were less common. *One loves those who do one good: the sentiment is a natural one.* Ingratitude is not in the human heart: but self-interest is: and there are fewer ungrateful receivers than there are interested benefactors. If you sell me your gifts I shall bargain over their price: but if you really sell what you pretend to give, you are guilty of fraud: it is because it is given gratuitously that a gift is inestimably precious. The heart receives laws only from itself: by trying to bind it, you make it free of obligations to you: you bind it to you, by leaving it free. Who ever saw a man forgotten by his benefactor, forget him? On the contrary, he speaks of him with pleasure, he cannot think of him without tender emotion; if by accident he find the occasion to render him some unexpected service, how glad he is to show that he has not forgotten what has been done for him; with what inner joy he satisfies his gratitude, with what delight, with what transports he exclaims, 'Now, my turn has come!' Here is the true voice of nature: never did a true benefit leave one who received it ungrateful."[1]

Taking Rousseau's arrival at Motiers as the first stage reached in his epoch of persecution, our inquiry must be into the truthfulness or falsehood of this commentary which follows the author of *Emile* along the path of his misfortunes. Sainte-Beuve's affirmation that Rousseau "is

[1] *Emile*, i., iv.

not ill-treated" by Grimm, need not be answered otherwise than by comparing the statement with the facts. But if we take the grounds of other critics—can the theory stand, that the editor of this *Correspondance Littéraire* said what he thought about a man he heartily disliked, and about books he did not appreciate?

This theory is untenable; for if we examine what Grimm does say about Rousseau, and compare it with what he knew to be true about a man with whom he had lived on terms of intimacy for eight years, we shall realize that, admitting the distorting effects of personal antipathy and hearty dislike in the way of twisting facts out of their true shape and proportion, we cannot attribute to these agencies the power of creating belief in gratuitous falsehoods.

Nor can it be maintained that even about the events of Rousseau's early life, Grimm, who did not make Jean Jacques' acquaintance until he was thirty-seven, may himself have been misinformed. The falsehoods told, prove that the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* used for his materials the confidences which his old friend must have given him in the days of their intimacy.

1. Thus: it was a falsehood that Rousseau's father had killed a man, and, flying from justice, had abandoned Jean Jacques in childhood to be brought up by a woman of rank. It was true, as readers of the *Confessions* know, that Isaac Rousseau, whom his son always described as an excellent citizen as well as a good father, had, as the result of an unimportant dispute with a fellow-citizen, been condemned to a short term of imprisonment; which, as he esteemed the sentence unjust, he refused to undergo, and consequently, that he had quitted Geneva and taken up his abode at Nyons, *putting his son at school with the pastor Lambercier at Boissy.* Whether or no we agree with the opinion of the author of the *Confessions*, that no child ever received a better education than he did,[1] we have proofs in the boy's ability to dispute

[1] *Conf.*, Part I. liv. 1.

with the monks at Turin on their version of Church history, and to astonish the Count de Gouvon by his knowledge of obsolete French verbs, that Jean Jacques, who at six years old found Plutarch's lives more entertaining than novels, was not a neglected ignoramus, who owed his elementary education to the charity of Madame de Warens.

2. It was a falsehood that, during the first thirty years of his life, Rousseau had reason to complain of fate, and had instead complained of men. His early manhood spent in Savoy, at Annecy, Chambéri, and Les Charmettes, was, the author of the *Confessions* is never weary of insisting, the happiest period of his life. During this period, he also frequently repeats, he received nothing but kindness, sympathy and affection, from all who surrounded him.

3. It was a falsehood that when Rousseau arrived in Paris with his System of Musical Annotation, in 1741 (that is to say before, and not after, his experiences as secretary to the French ambassador at Venice), "his *Dissertation* was read by no one, and that he remained penniless, unknown, ignorant of his own talents, seeking in frightful straits for some means to escape from dying of hunger." Rousseau came to Paris provided with good introductions, which procured him the interest in his scheme of Réamur, President of the Académie des Sciences. On the 22nd August, 1742, he had the honour of reading before the Academy his dissertation upon modern music. The Academy accorded him a certificate, "full of fine compliments," says the author of the *Confessions;* "but behind which one could recognize that they thought my system neither new nor useful." But if his new system of musical annotation did not enrich him, it served to introduce him to intellectual and scientific leaders of contemporary opinions in the brilliant Paris of the period. "My frequent visits to academicians and commissioners," he wrote, "put me in the way of knowing all the most distinguished men of letters in Paris; and

by this means, the acquaintanceship with them was already formed, before I became one of them."

4. It was a falsehood that the humiliations and restraints Rousseau endured as Madame Dupin's secretary did much to embitter his character. Readers of the *Confessions* will recollect the episode which commenced the acquaintanceship between Jean Jacques, at twenty-eight years of age, and Madame Dupin.

The beautiful Parisian woman of fashion received the young, inexperienced and susceptible musician from Savoy when she was at her toilette. "Elle avait les bras nus, les cheveux épars, son peignoir mal arrangé : cet abord m'était très nouveau ; ma pauvre tête n'y tint pas, et bref me voilà épris de Madame Dupin." She shows interest in his book, discusses his musical projects, seats herself at the piano, and accompanies him, keeps him to dinner and gives him the place next her ; in short, turns his head ! The simpleton Jean Jacques writes her a love-letter ; gets snubbed as he deserves, and—one would expect, dismissed for ever from Madame Dupin's list of acquaintances ? Not at all. The lady undertakes him, as her protégé first of all ; afterwards she becomes his constant friend, interested in his concerns, and seeking his counsels in her own difficulties. Nor was it only with Madame Dupin herself that Rousseau became a confidential friend and an adviser. M. de Francueil, Madame Dupin's step-son, was the first lover of Madame d'Epinay ; and it was whilst the *liaison* was in its tender period, that de Francueil recommended Rousseau to Madame d'Epinay's friendship. Madame de Chenonceau again, who was Rousseau's constant friend, was Madame Dupin's daughter-in-law. And it was the request of this lady that he would draw up for her some rules for the education of her son, which first suggested to Rousseau the idea of writing *Emile.*

In brief, the falsehood that Rousseau had endured

[1] *Conf.*, Part II. i. ; IV. vii.

"humiliations" at the hands of one who really deserved to be described as an "old friend," and whose friendship dated before the time of his celebrity, was a libel against Madame Dupin as well as against Rousseau. It was a libel which the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* endeavoured to support by a malicious anecdote given in his secret journal some years later. In 1769, when recording the death of M. Dupin, Grimm seized the opportunity of recalling the fact that Rousseau had been his wife's secretary.

"A curious anecdote," affirmed the editor, "is that Madame Dupin entertained once a week at dinner, Fontenelle, Marivaux, Mairan, and other men of talent; and that upon this day, Rousseau was given a holiday, so far were they from suspecting what he really was."

In 1778, this "curious anecdote" is reproduced by La Harpe, who is explaining Rousseau's alleged sour dislike of other men of letters.

"He did not forget," wrote La Harpe, "that when he was M. Dupin's clerk, he did not dine at table upon the day when men of letters met there." [1]

It will be noticed that the legend has progressed. Rousseau has sunk in the social scale from a "secretary" to a "clerk" (*un commis*). He is not "given a holiday," but he "does not dine at table" with his betters.

By Rousseau's own account, Madame Dupin, and other women of society, before he became famous treated him with the courteous friendliness which belonged to the polished manners of the epoch. In 1747, that is to say three years before the first *Discourse* made him famous, Rousseau passed the autumn in the Château of Chenonceau, possessed by M. Dupin. "One amused one's self

[1] See *Mercure de France*, 1778. The article containing this anecdote is one of those reproduced in A. A. Barbier's *Supplément au cours de Littérature de La Harpe*. The story that Rousseau was excluded from Madame Dupin's table when she entertained men of letters has been taken seriously by the larger number of modern critics.

much in this fine abode," writes the author of the *Confessions;* "one fared sumptuously, and I became as stout as any monk. Music was going on all day, and I composed several trios. Also there were private theatricals, and I wrote, in a fortnight, a comedy in three acts, called, *L'Engagement Téméraire*, which will be found amongst my papers, but which has no other merits than much liveliness. I also composed whilst here several other small works, amongst others some verses called the *Allée de Sylvie*, from the name of an avenue of the park on the banks of the Cher. And all that was done without discontinuing my work on chemistry,[1] and what I did also for Madame Dupin."[2]

Here certainly was a secretary who was not treated as a dependent, nor subjected to humiliating restraints by his employers, nor refused by them a place at their table when they entertained men of letters.

As for the assertion that Rousseau's character had been embittered by material hardships or by consistent misfortunes, the author of the *Confessions* always declared that the epoch of his celebrity was the starting-point of his real misfortunes. Poverty and the fear of poverty, he affirmed, had never the power to affect him permanently, or to leave behind them painful impressions. Notwithstanding, then, the vicissitudes he had undergone during the first thirty years of his life, they had left with him only romantic and delightful memories. The seven or eight years that preceded his leap to fame, spent at Venice and in Paris, were amongst conditions of life distasteful to him; but throughout these years, he had enjoyed the friendship, and trusted in the sincere affection, of the same men of letters who became, after his success, first his secret, and then his open, enemies. And notwithstanding his precarious fortunes, his intimacy in two of the most brilliant houses in Paris, the houses of M. Dupin and M. de la Poplinière, brought him during

[1] With M. de Francueil.

[2] *Confessions*, Part II. book vii.

these years, without any effort of his own, the acquaintanceship of some very distinguished personages; amongst others of the Duc de Richelieu, the Baron de Thun, and the young hereditary Prince of Saxe-Gotha, in whose household, Grimm held a dependent position when, in 1749, Rousseau, as a visitor to the Prince, first made his acquaintance.

We have arrived now at a period when Grimm's statements were made in direct contradiction of facts personally known to him; we may affirm—

1. That the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* knew it to be false that Rousseau was unknown in literary circles before his first *Discourse* made him famous. Grimm knew this all the better, because it was to Rousseau that he owed his own introduction to Diderot, to the Baron d'Holbach, and to Madame d'Epinay.

2. Grimm knew it to be false when he affirmed that Rousseau "only professed to exercise the trade of a musical copyist, whilst in reality he followed no other trade than that of an author."

3. Grimm knew it to be false when he said that Rousseau "persecuted Madame d'Epinay to lend him the Hermitage."

4. He knew it to be false that Rousseau became a real savage at Montmorency, that living in the country turned his head and soured his temper.

5. He knew it to be false, and he himself tells a different story in 1767, that in the society of himself and Diderot, Rousseau had found friendship and esteem; and that it was the envious Jean Jacques, who, because he had felt their superiority in talent, had abandoned his old friends; and had replaced them by people of the highest rank, viz., the Duke and Duchess of Luxembourg.

6. He knew it to be false when he maintained that Rousseau, in his intercourse with great people, was guilty of either brutal rudeness or servility; his reply to the attack made upon the first *Discourse* by the King of

Poland may serve to show that Rousseau did not use with princes an offensive tone that would have been impertinent if employed to a water carrier; and a letter of his to the Duchess of Luxembourg[1] proves that he did not profess to believe that virtue and friendship were found only amongst people of high rank. Grimm also knew it to be false that Rousseau had called the little dog (that was his faithful companion during his stay at the Hermitage, as well as at Mont Louis) 'Duc,' because "it was mean in appearance and snappish in temper."

Finally, if Grimm, four years after his rupture with Rousseau, did not *know* it to be false that Jean Jacques had passed the last days before his flight in convulsions of despair, his affirmation that this was the report, shows the same effort to bring his old friend into contempt, as the other statement he *did* know to be false and calculated to injure the fugitive in the estimation of his *abonnés* in Geneva, that whilst praising his native city, Rousseau secretly detested her.

As for the implication that the private and domestic life of a man, already painted in every other capacity as false and hateful, concealed worse secrets than had been already revealed, Grimm knew this to be false also.

So much then for the truthfulness of this kind of biography. If we examine what is the consistent purpose pursued, and the general impression these separate falsehoods are meant to produce, the first object stands out clearly; it is to convince the kings, ministers, dukes, duchesses, countesses, marquises, etc., for whom these secret communications were especially prepared, that this man of base origin, bitter experiences, soured temper, and envious and treacherous disposition, is the natural enemy of great people and hater of authority; that, as a founder of sects, an inflamer of popular passions, and a sower of mischievous opinions he will certainly stir up trouble wherever he settles, and

[1] *Conf.*, Part II. book x.

therefore cannot be protected without peril to public order. But outside of the immediate end of strengthening the hands of Rousseau's persecutors, and of stirring up fresh persecutions for him, we discover in Grimm's insistence, on all occasions upon this great "defect" of M. Rousseau that "he is never natural," and that all his professions, actions and writings are so many illustrations of his "bad faith," the consistent and steadily pursued endeavour to build up for him the pre-appointed reputation of "a monster of falsity, wearing the disguise of a prophet of truth."

In this advocate of sincerity of speech and simplicity in manners, who himself always acts a part (whether as the too honeyed flatterer of great people he detests; or as one who puts on the mantle of a cynic, but "under his affected brusqueness keeps a good deal of his old art of paying elaborate compliments, especially in his dealings with women"); in this preacher of independence and of the distinctions to be made between happiness and wealth, between nobility of character and social rank, who advertises himself by professing to earn his bread by a trade he does not practise; and who, openly refusing pensions and patronage, persecutes his friends for secret services and refuses them all gratitude; who abandons his old friends out of envy of their superior talents; and runs after great people in order that he may bask in their favour and enjoy their compliments without rivalry; in this professed devotee of solitude and a country life, who to gain notoriety leaves Paris, but after eighteen months' habitation of his Hermitage becomes, for want of the excitement and adulation necessary to him, a misanthropical maniac, at war with mankind at large and who has quarrelled with all his friends—we have the first definite sketch of the impostor Jean Jacques, who differs so essentially from the Jean Jacques painted by d'Esehernay, by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, and by other impartial contemporaries; but who has served as the model of the reconstructed René of Madame d'Epinay's novel. That is

to say, of the René whom we discover, by the examination of the Archives and Arsenal manuscript, has been altered from the commencement of his history onwards; and differs then essentially, also, from the René originally painted by Madame d'Epinay.

CHAPTER II

SECOND ACT—FROM 1762 TO 1765

Rousseau, under the protection of Frederic, considered himself safe at Motiers Travers. His residence here was, during two years, brightened by the cordial and affectionate terms of his intimacy with the Governor of Neuchatel, Lord-Marshal Keith; and we have the Count d'Eschernay's evidence[1] to prove that during this time persecution and exile had not robbed him of cheerfulness, nor destroyed his belief that ultimately justice would be done him. Nevertheless these three years at Motiers, from August 1762 to September 1765 were years of combat.

On the 25th August, 1762, appeared a Mandate against *Emile*, issued by the Archbishop of Paris, Christopher de Beaumont.

Rousseau's *Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont*, his reply to the denunciation of his book as "erroneous, impious, blasphemous and heretical," is one of the finest and most impressive of his shorter books. It bears the date November 1762, but appeared only in March 1763. Condemned at once by the Parliament of Paris, the letter was also, to Rousseau's sore disappointment and grief, condemned by the Council of Geneva. This sentence, and the fact that though there had been much discontent amongst his fellow-citizens at his ill-treatment, there had been no formal protest against the illegality of the proceedings against him, decided Rousseau to resign his title of citizenship.

His letter to the First Syndic, abdicating his title and right of citizenship, dated 12th May, 1763, is dis-

[1] See Note A A, Appendix, vol. i.

VILLAGE OF MOTIERS-TRAVERS. (From a photograph, 1897.)

For a description of the Val de Travers and of Motiers, see in J. J. Rousseau's Correspondence a manuscript letter to Maréchal de Luxembourg, 28 January 1763.

[*To face page* 114.

tinguished by its tone of respectful regret and dignified self-restraint.

"I have striven," he wrote, "to do honour to the name of citizen of Geneva. I have tenderly loved my compatriots and have neglected nothing that I could do to earn their love in return. But here no one could have failed more hopelessly than I have done. I would now seek to satisfy them even in the hatred they bear me. The last sacrifice I can make is that of a name that was very dear to me. But, sir, if I become a stranger to my country I can never become indifferent to her. I shall continue always attached to her by tender memories, and shall forget nothing I owe her but her outrages. May she always prosper, may her glory increase, may she abound in citizens, better, and above all, happier than I."

Rousseau's resignation of his title of citizenship created intense excitement amongst his admirers.

A group of influential burghers and citizens now undertook, too late in the day, the organization of a legal movement recognized as amongst the constitutional rights of the inhabitants of Geneva, demanding the reconsideration of the decision of the Council. Rousseau's correspondence shows that, far from encouraging this demonstration of citizens and burghers, he did his best to dissuade his personal friends and relations from taking any part in it. He admitted that if these representations had been made before he had abdicated his citizenship, he should have considered the proof of the sentiment of his compatriots towards him, a sufficient reason for remaining one of them. But whereas no expression of public opinion in Geneva had shown indignation at the injustice of his condemnation by the Council for ten months after that event, he had felt bound in honour to renounce the name of citizen; and that step having been taken, these tardy representations served no purpose but to disturb, uselessly, public order. Nevertheless the movement, once set on foot, took

another character. And the arbitrary refusal of the Council of Twenty-Five to consider the petition of a large number of citizens and burghers that the legality of the sentence condemning the author of *Emile* should be examined by a general Council, became the occasion of a popular protest against the usurpation by the Lesser Council of the authority to nullify, by what was called *le droit negatif*, the representation of a sufficient number of citizens, who appealed back from the Council's opinion to a general Council.

In December 1763 appeared *Les Lettres de la Campagne*, a work defending the conduct of the Council of Geneva in the measure taken against Rousseau. The author of these letters was the Procureur-Général Tronchin, brother of the famous Doctor Tronchin—who had once professed himself a devoted admirer of Rousseau's; but who, introduced by Jean Jacques to Madame d'Epinay, became her partisan after the quarrel between the lady and her former friend. Tronchin was not only Madame d'Epinay's doctor, but also, as his letters to her testify, an ardent admirer of this fascinating woman of the world.[1]

Rousseau's reply to the Procureur-Général Tronchin's *Lettres de la Campagne* was published in December 1764, under the title of *Lettres de la Montagne*. Tronchin had maintained that the Council of Geneva had treated the author of *Emile*, not only with perfect legality, but with special leniency. Rousseau made it his task to establish by irrefutable proofs that the Council had not only shown exceptional severity, but had violated the laws of the Constitution, in its treatment of him—so that even had he been guilty of the offences with which he was charged, his condemnation would have been unjustly pronounced. In the second and third letters, he appealed to the principles and history of the Reformation to support his declaration that he had not in *Emile* attacked or opposed any of the doctrines of the reformed faith. These letters,

[1] See Appendix, Note I.

dealing with the authority of miracles as proofs of divine revelation, are of extreme value to the student of Rousseau's philosophy, and of his position as the inaugurator of what is usually called the modern spiritual attitude towards these questions. In the two last and longest of these letters, Rousseau, leaving his own case on one side, considered the peril to the liberties of the Republic of the usurpation by the Council of the *droit negatif:* in other words, of the right to reject, without examining them, the representations of a considerable number of citizens, demanding a general Council to reconsider the decision of the Lesser Council.

Immediately on its appearance, Rousseau's reply to the Letters from the Country was condemned to be burnt at Geneva, at Paris, and, this time, also at the Hague.

An episode that took place between the publication of the Letters from the Country and Rousseau's reply in the Letters from the Mountain, helps us to remember, what this monotonous record of persecuting edicts and denunciatory mandates tend to conceal: the fact that the author of *Emile* and of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* continued, notwithstanding decrees of Parliament and the calumnies of secret enemies, the most admired and revered writer of his day.

In the *Contrat Social,* Rousseau had written: "There is still in Europe one country open to legislation, and that is the Island of Corsica. The valour and constancy with which this brave people has recovered and defended its liberty, entitle it to the happiness of finding a wise legislator to teach them to preserve it. I have a presentiment that this little island will one day astonish Europe."

On the 31st August, 1764, the banished author of the *Contrat Social* received at Motiers a letter from the Corsican patriotic leaders, Butta-foco, and Paoli, asking him to assist them in forming a constitution for their country that would help to preserve to it the liberty it

had shed its blood to obtain. An extract from this letter will show how far Grimm's professed belief in Rousseau's "bad faith" and the extravagant unserviceableness of his doctrines was from being the prevailing opinion.

"You mentioned Corsica, sir, in your *Contrat Social*," wrote Butta-foco, "in a most flattering way to our country. Such praise from a pen so sincere as yours is calculated to produce emulation, and a desire to do better things. It has suggested the strong wish that you would be the wise legislator who would assist the nation to maintain the liberties obtained at the cost of so much blood. I recognize, of course, that the task I dare to press you to undertake needs the special knowledge of details to give you a full understanding of our position. But, if you deign to accept this charge, I should supply you with all the light necessary; and M. Paoli, General-in-chief, will use his best endeavours to send you from Corsica all the information you may want. This distinguished chief, and indeed all my compatriots who have the advantage to know your works, share my desire; and *the sentiments of respect that all Europe has for you, and which are due to you upon so many grounds.*"

Rousseau's reply to this letter is dated 22nd September, 1764. It shows that he was touched and delighted to receive this testimony of the confidence felt in him by the Corsican chiefs; and that he seriously desired to weigh their proposition; and, if possible, to serve them. In these circumstances, no more signal proof could be found that the love of notoriety attributed to him by his enemies was entirely foreign to his disposition, than his silence upon the subject of this flattering offer. On the 15th November, his letter to the Prince of Wirtemberg shows that the Prince himself has asked for information about a report, probably gathered from Grimm's *Correspondance* of that month.

"It is true," writes Rousseau, in reply to the Prince of Wirtemberg, "that the Corsicans have proposed to

me to work at drawing up for them a form of government. If this work is beyond my power, it is not beyond my zeal for them. But it has to be realized that this is an enterprise to be carefully meditated upon; and which needs all sorts of preliminary conditions to make it possible, and especially, before undertaking it, one has to know what France intends to do with these poor people. In the meanwhile, I believe General Paoli merits universal esteem and respect, because, being the master, he has addressed himself to one whom he knew well would admit of no master superior to the law, except in time of war. I should be ready to consecrate my life to their service; but I am not ready to expose myself to useless loss of time. We shall see what will happen."

The reasonable observation that before setting oneself to the work of framing a constitution for Corsica, it was wise to see whether France intended to allow the little island to have one, or to keep her independence, proves that the "extravagant Rousseau" whom Mr. Morley knew so well—on this occasion, at any rate, showed much more sense of the difference between reality and dreams than, as we shall presently discover,[1] did the positive and judicious Grimm, who, "above all things," so Mr. Morley considers, "hated declamation."

LE SENTIMENT DES CITOYENS.

On the 6th January, 1765, Rousseau sent to his publisher, Duchesne, in Paris, the copy of the detestable libel, entitled, *Sentiments des Citoyens,* whose author is now known to have been Voltaire—*but the accusations made against Rousseau in connection with alleged ill-treatment of Madame Levasseur, and the abandonment of his children, must have been based on reports given Voltaire either by Grimm or by Madame d'Épinay.*

"After the Letters from the Country," wrote the

[1] See page 134.

author of the libel, "we have now the Letters from the Mountains: here are the sentiments upon them of this town. *One is sorry for a lunatic: but when his folly turns to fury one ties him up. Tolerance, which is a virtue, would otherwise become a vice.*

"We pitied Jean Jacques Rousseau, ci-devant citizen of our town, when he was only hooted at the opera; and made mock of on the stage; and represented there as walking on all-fours. True, this disgrace reflected a little upon us. It was hard for a Genevese arriving in Paris to be humiliated by the scorn heaped upon a compatriot. Some of us warned him, but did not succeed in correcting him. We forgave him his novels, in which decency and modesty were as little respected as was common-sense. Our town was in other days famous for the purity of its morals and for solid works, which attracted foreigners to our Academy. It was the first time that one of our citizens became known as the author of books which offended morality, which were despised by respectable people, and which piety condemned. But when this author introduced irreligion into his novels, our magistrates were indispensably compelled to imitate those of Paris, and of Berne, who in the first case sentenced him to arrest, and in the second case banished him. But the Council of Geneva, mindful of compassion, as well as of justice, left open a door of repentance; so that the culprit might return to his country and obtain his grace. But to-day is not her patience rightly exhausted, when he dares to publish a new libel, wherein he furiously outrages the Christian religion; the reformation, which he professed to believe in, and all the ministers of the gospel? . . . . Is it allowable for a man born in our town to offend in this way our pastors, of whom so many are our dear friends and relatives; and who so often are our consolers? Let us consider who it is that treats them thus. Is it a man of learning, who disputes with other learned men? No: it is the author of an opera, and of two

plays, hissed from the stage. Is it a good man, who, misled by false zeal, indiscreetly reproaches other virtuous men? With grief and shame, we find we have to admit that it is a man who bears about upon him the disfiguring marks of his debaucheries; and who, disguised as a mountebank, drags after him, from village to village, and from mountain to mountain, the unfortunate wretch whose mother he let die of hunger; and whose children he exposed on the doorsteps of a hospital, whilst rejecting the offer of a charitable person to take care of them, thus abjuring all natural sentiments, as well those of humanity as of religion. Here, then, is the man who presumes to offer advice to his fellow citizens, etc."

When enclosing this libel, Rousseau added this concise comment:

"I wish to make as simply as possible the declaration which this article seems to require from me. Never has any one of those shameful illnesses spoken of by the author soiled my body. The complaint I suffer from has no sort of connection with these maladies: I was born with it, as the persons, still living, who took care of me in my childhood can testify. The nature of this complaint is known to MM. Malouin, Moraud, Thiery, Daron and Côme, who at different times have treated me. If they have observed anything indicating debauchery in me, I beg of them to denounce me; and to make me ashamed of the device I have chosen. The well-conducted and generally respected person who cares for me in my infirmities, and consoles me in my afflictions, is only unfortunate because she shares the fate of a man who is unfortunate. Her mother is at the present moment alive and in good health, although of an advanced age. I have never exposed, nor caused to be exposed, any child at the door of any hospital or elsewhere. A person capable of the charity described, would also have had the charity to keep the secret! and it might be understood that it is not from Geneva, where I have never lived, and where so much animosity against

me prevails, that true information about my private life can be obtained. Upon this passage, I will only say that, short of murder, I would rather have been guilty of what the author accuses me of than have written it."

"The first effect of the Letters from the Mountain," affirms Rousseau in the *Confessions*, "was very peaceable. I sent a copy to M. de Montmollin,[1] who made no objection to it. But from Geneva, from Berne, perhaps from Versailles, the fire or excitement soon spread to Neuchatel; and especially to the Val de Travers—where before any open movement amongst the pastors had begun, they had commenced, by underhand means, to stir up the people against me."

When our examination of the *Correspondance Littéraire* has commenced, we shall know whence came the rumour about the irreligious and abominably subversive doctrines contained in a book excessively difficult to obtain. On the 12th March, 1765, the "Venerable Class," as the Neuchatel pastors in committee were called, held a meeting to consider whether or no the author of the Letters from the Mountain should be excommunicated. A letter from Lord-Marshal Keith, addressed to the Procureur-General Meuron, informed the "Venerable Class" officially, that any measures of a persecuting character taken against a distinguished writer to whom Frederic had accorded a refuge in his principality of Neuchatel would be extremely displeasing to the King. In these circumstances the "Venerable Class" dared not proceed immediately to the excommunication of Rousseau; but they summoned him to appear before the Consistory on the 29th March; and to undergo an examination as to his doctrines at the hands of the pastor of Motiers, who, to vindicate himself from the charge of having too indulgently admitted the author of *Emile* to the Sacred Table, now showed himself especially zealous in his denunciations of the Letters from the Mountain. Rousseau declined to

[1] Pastor of Motiers.

appear, upon the grounds that, as a layman, he was not accountable to the Consistory for his opinions upon matters of faith. His objection was supported by the Chatelain of the Val de Travers, the Government official with authority to decide the legal aspects of the case. The pastor of Motiers was also admonished ; and warned that persistence in these proceedings would lead to the suppression of the grants he received from the Government, and, possibly, to his dismissal from his charge. M. de Montmollin, whilst professing to withdraw from all public action against Rousseau, continued to excite, by his sermons and letters, the animosity of his parishioners against this "anti-Christ," inflicted upon the pious people of Neuchatel after he had been repudiated by all other Christian states. Rousseau could no longer walk in the country without being insulted and threatened by the peasants; and on the 7th and 8th of September, at the time of the fair at Motiers, and when the police were engaged with the maintenance of public order, his house was attacked ; and his life, and that of Thérèse, endangered by showers of heavy stones hurled through his windows; one huge stone having been flung with such force as to break open his bedroom door in such a way that, had the occupant of the room been at the moment attempting to escape, he would inevitably have been killed on the spot. The Chatelain, summoned by a neighbour, arrived with the guard in time to save Rousseau from positive injury; but his report to the Council of State, and the report of the Procureur-General, drawn up the following day, describing the condition of the premises and the missiles used, afford indisputable evidence that Rousseau did not exaggerate the evil disposition towards him of the assailants. These documents, published from the original, preserved at Neuchatel, and in Berlin, have been reproduced by[1] M. Fritz Berthoud and by M. Albert Jansens.[2]

[1] J. J. Rousseau au Valde Travers en 1762–1765.
[2] Documents sur J. J. Rousseau, 1762–1765.

On the 10th September, Rousseau left Motiers, and on the 17th reached the Island of Saint Pierre, in the Lake Bienne. He was allowed to remain there just a month. On the 17th October he received an intimation from the Senate of Berne ordering him to quit the island that lay within their territory. He wrote, in the weariness of those constant wanderings (that his ill-health, advancing age and poor means, rendered especially cruel), to ask to be imprisoned in the place of rest, that this solitary little island was to him, rather than to be driven from it. This favour was refused him. On the 28th October he left Bienne; and on the 5th November he reached Strasburg; his intention then being to accept the invitation that, through Lord-Maréchal Keith, then with the King, Frederic had made him, of a refuge near Potsdam.

We have now to see what part was taken by the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* in the attacks made upon Rousseau during his residence at Motiers; and what responsibility can be traced home to him for the calumnies which excited the clergy and populace of Motiers against an illustrious exile; to whom their sovereign had accorded a refuge; who was on friendly terms with their Governor, and whose quiet and blameless life and charitable habits not only gave no cause of offence, but helped to lighten the burthens of his poorer neighbours.

The Mandate of the Archbishop of Paris against *Emile* was dated 25th August, 1762. On the 15th of September, the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* informed his *abonnés* that this condemnation had followed upon the sentences of the Parliament of Paris, the Council of Geneva and the Senate of Berne. The editor continued: [1]

"The portrait of Jean Jacques at the commencement of Monseigneur's Mandate has had a great success in Paris. And people are ready to wager that

[1] *Corresp. Litt.*, vol. v. p. 162.

this piece is the work of a layman, and not of an ecclesiastic."

When we compare the portrait in question with the picture of Rousseau that was the special property of its original producers, Grimm and Diderot, there seems much significance in the suggestion that the writer of the first proposition of the Mandate was *not the Archbishop himself.*

"There has arisen a man," proclaimed the denouncer of *Emile*, "full of the language of philosophy, but no true philosopher; a mind endowed with a variety of knowledge, which has not enlightened him, but has helped him to darken the minds of others; a character devoted to paradoxes in opinions and in conduct, uniting simplicity in manners with extravagance of thought; zeal for the maxims of antiquity with the rage for novelties; a retired life, with the desire to be known by the whole world. One has seen him, turn by turn, abusing the sciences, and cultivating them; proclaiming the excellence of the gospel, whilst he destroyed its dogmas; painting the beauties of the virtues, which he extinguished in the souls of his readers. He has made himself the teacher of the human race, in order to deceive it; the monitor of the public, to lead it astray; the oracle of the century, to consummate its ruin. In a work upon the inequality of conditions, he had lowered men to the rank of brutes; in a more recent production, he had insinuated the poison of voluptuousness into his readers, whilst professing to proscribe it; in this work, he takes possession of the first moments of human life, in order to establish the empire of irreligion."[1]

In confirmation of the view that it was not the Archbishop who wrote this piece (where we recognize the originator of the theory that one must always see in Rousseau two opposite things at the same time) we

[1] Compare with this the Note of Diderot added on to his Essay upon Seneca, see p. 57–58, and with Grimm's "criticism" of the Letters from the Mountains, p. 138.

may accept the testimony of an ecclesiastic, the Abbé Briand, who knew Monseigneur de Beaumont intimately and who thus describes his personal opinion of Rousseau.

"I noticed," wrote the Abbé, "that Monseigneur, who spoke willingly of Voltaire, never spoke of Rousseau unless it were to say some words in praise of his character and of his virtues, in opposing them to those of his rival in glory. Monseigneur's good, benevolent and virtuous heart felt the merits of the sage of Geneva: he respected his voluntary poverty, his genius, and his good faith."

Rousseau's *Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont* was produced by Rey of Amsterdam, in March 1763.

On the 15th May, 1763,[1] Grimm wrote: "I have had an opportunity of rapidly reading through the letter of J. J. Rousseau to Christopher de Beaumont. This work resembles M. Rousseau's other books in that it is often extravagant. He protests afresh here that he has no wish to pass for a philosopher: and he may rest satisfied that he does not appear as one: for, *following his custom, he does not seek to speak the truth, but to contradict what others say.* Thus the doctors have not dared to defend civil intolerance: but have only relied on ecclesiastical intolerance; accordingly M. Rousseau maintains that the first sort of intolerance is just, and that the second is odious. This is writing from sheer love of *contradiction, but it is also lending very cruel arms to fanaticism; for as a result of this sophistry, the author expressly says that the first Protestants in France were justly persecuted, and that the oppression they underwent only ceased to be just when by solemn conventions their faith had been sanctioned by the State. What a tissue of abominable absurdities.* The author says that all his writings have the happiness of mankind for their object: but he is so terribly afraid lest we should profit by them, or flatter ourselves with the belief that we could be happy, that he instantly

[1] *Corresp. Litt.*, vol. v., p. 283.

adds: 'But I can give no assurance that, in the present state of things, what I recommend is absolutely possible.' Oh! he would not have such a thought to reproach himself with. He says, in another place, that he knows a little what men are: because he has not always had the happiness to live alone! . . . He has just written to the Council of Geneva to request that his name may be effaced from the table of citizens. One does not very well see the object of this solemn piece of folly. But one sees in it only too plainly the proof of the anxiety and agitation of his mind. It is said that he will follow my Lord-Maréchal to Scotland; and Rousseau exclaimed in this connection: 'At length I shall have the happiness of living amongst men whose language I shall not understand.'"[1]

It will be understood how bad an impression upon the Genevese notables and Protestant princes amongst the *abonnés* to the *Correspondance Littéraire*, would be produced by the information that this "sophist Jean Jacques" was now lending cruel arms to fanaticism, and justifying the persecution of the first French Protestants! In order to appreciate Grimm's methods of criticism, it is necessary to quote at length the passage from the *Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont* upon which this report was based:—

("Rousseau is defending himself against the article in the Archbishop's Mandate, where he is charged with having professed the doctrine, that '*all religions degraded God by giving Him human passions.*' What Rousseau had said (by the mouth of the Vicar of Savoy) was that '*the revelations of men had degraded God, and far from enlightening our notions of Him, had confused and debased them.*'[2] In this *Letter*, the prophet of natural religion elaborates the statements made in *Emile*, that what are called 'religious quarrels,' have nearly always been about matters that are not religious: dogmas and ceremonials, *le culte extérieur;* and that 'if

[1] See Note, Appendix.

[2] *Emile*, i., book iv.

men had only listened to the voice of God within them, there would have been but one religion on the earth.'")

"I neither say nor think that there is no good religion on earth," wrote Rousseau, "but I say, and it is, alas! too true, that there is not one amongst those that are, or that have been, dominant, which has not inflicted cruel wounds on humanity. All these sects have tormented their brothers. All have offered up to God sacrifices of human blood. Whatever may be the cause of these contradictions, they exist—is it a crime to desire to do away with them?

"For this reason, it appears to me a great good to teach the people to reason about religion, for it is making them recognize the duties of man, taking from fanaticism its weapon, and restoring to humanity its rights. But one must re-mount to general principles, those common to all mankind; for if, desiring to reason, you allow the authority of priests to take the lead, you give back its weapon to fanaticism, and you supply it with the means of becoming cruel.

"It appears to me credible that, after these long periods lost in puerile controversies, men of sense will some day seek for a means of conciliation. The first thing they will propose will be to put out of the assembly all theologians. This good work done, they will say to the peoples—'So long as you do not agree upon any common principle it is impossible for you to understand each other; and it is an argument that has never convinced any one to say, I am right, and you are wrong. You speak of what is agreeable to God, but that is precisely what is in question! If we knew which creed was most agreeable to Him, there would be no dispute between us. But you also speak of what is useful to men—that is a different matter. Men can decide this. Let us take this utility for our rule, and then let us establish the doctrine which is nearest to it. We may by this means hope to approach as near to the truth as is possible to men; for we may assume that what is most useful

to the creatures of His hand, is most agreeable to the Creator.'

"Let us first of all seek if there is any natural affinity between us: if we are something to one another. 'You, Jews, what do you believe about the origin of the human race?' 'We think it came from one Father.' 'And you, Christians?' 'Upon this point we think like the Jews.' 'And you, Turks?' 'We think like the Jews and Christians.' This is already good: since men are brothers they should love each other. 'And now tell us from whom did their common Father receive his being, for he did not make himself?' 'From the Creator of the earth and heavens.' Jews, Christians, and Turks agree here also: that is another great point in common. 'And this man, the work of the Creator, is he a simple or a duplex being? Is he formed of one substance? Christians, reply. 'He is composed of two substances, one mortal, and one that cannot die.' 'And you, Turks?' 'We think the same.' 'And you, Jews?' 'Once our ideas on this subject were confused, as are the terms of our sacred books; but the Essenians have enlightened us, and on this point also we think the same as the Christians.'

"Proceeding thus from question to question, and on all the questions essential for the ordering of human life having obtained nearly the same replies, these men of common-sense (you will recollect that there are no theologians amongst them) will say:—

"My friends, why torment yourselves? Here you are, all of one mind, about what really concerns you; if you differ in your sentiments as to outside matters, I see nothing to worry over in that. Form from this small number of articles a religion, that will be, so to speak, the universal human and social religion which all men living in society will be obliged to admit. *If any one dogmatizes against it,* let him be banished from this society as the enemy of its fundamental laws. As for the rest, in matters upon which you are not all

agreed, form each one of you from your special beliefs so many national religions; and follow them in sincerity of heart: but do not torment other people to accept them, and rest assured God does not require you to do so. For it is as unjust to wish to make them subject to your opinions as to your laws, and missionaries appear to me hardly wiser than conquerors. And when following your several doctrines, cease to regard them as so well proved that whoever does not see them as you do must thereby be guilty of bad faith; do not believe that those who weigh your proofs and reject them, are for this reason obstinate sceptics, who deserve punishment for their incredulity; do not believe that reason, love of truth, and sincerity, belong exclusively to you. Prefer your own reason, that is right and just: but recognize that people who are not convinced by them, have a right to prefer their reasons to yours. Honour in a general way the founders of different creeds: let each one render to the founder of his own creed what he believes owing to him, without despising those the followers of other creeds revere. In all these creeds have been great geniuses and men of extraordinary virtue; and these are always estimable. They have described themselves as messengers from God; that may have been true, or may not have been true; here is what can never be determined by every one, because every one cannot test and prove their different claims. But even if it be not true, they must not lightly be pronounced impostors. Who can say how continual meditations about the Divinity, how enthusiasm for virtue, may in these high souls have disturbed the order that schools and holds in check vulgar ideas? At a too elevated height, the head turns and one does not see things as they are. Socrates believed he had a familiar spirit, and no one has dared to accuse him as a cheat. Shall we treat the founders of nations in remote ages, the benefactors of peoples, with less consideration? And for that matter, let there be no disputes between you

about the creeds you prefer; all are equally good if, prescribed by the law, they have in them the essential religion—they are bad if they have not this. The formal creed is the police of religion, not its essence; and it belongs to the sovereign to regulate the police of his country.

"It seems to me, my Lord Archbishop, that one who reasoned thus would be neither a blasphemer nor an impious man; but that when proposing a means of peace, just, reasonable, and useful to mankind, he might quite well have at the same time his own particular religion, and be as sincerely attached to it as others are. The true believer, knowing that the infidel is also a man, and that he may be an honest man, can, without any crime, take an interest in the infidel's destiny. Let him prevent if he can the introduction of a foreign creed into his country, that is just: but do not let him damn those who do not agree with him, for whosoever pronounces this judgment makes himself the enemy of the human race outside of his own sect. I constantly hear it said that one must recognize civil toleration, but not theological. I think just the contrary. I believe that a good man in any religion he follows sincerely may be saved. But I do not believe that for this reason one can legitimately introduce into a country foreign creeds without the sovereign's permission; for if this is not direct disobedience to God it is disobedience to the law; and who disobeys the laws disobeys God. As for religions once established or tolerated in a country, I believe that it is unjust and barbarous to destroy them by violence, and that the sovereign injures himself when ill-treating these sectarians. There is a great difference between embracing a new religion, and living in the one where one is born: only the first is punishable. One should neither let a diversity of creeds establish itself, nor proscribe those already established, for a son is never to blame for following the religion of his father. Reason and the interests of public order are against the

persecutor. Religion never excites trouble in a state except when the dominant party wishes to torment the weaker, or when the weaker party, intolerant by principle, won't live in peace with any one. Never have the Protestants taken up arms in France until they were persecuted. If they had been left in peace they would have lived peaceably. I agree that in the commencement the reformed religion had no right to establish itself in France in defiance of the laws: but when transmitted from father to son, this religion had become that of a part of the French nation, and that the Prince had formed a solemn treaty with this part by the Edict of Nantes, this Edict became an inviolable treaty, which could not be annulled without the consent of the two parties: and since that time the exercise of the Protestant religion in France is, in my opinion, legal."

Can it now be maintained that Grimm honestly criticized the *Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont*, when he reported of it that it "lent cruel arms to fanaticism, and justified the persecution of the Protestants in France"? Are we able to suppose that this work actually conveyed to him the impression that its author "did not seek to speak the truth or to serve the interests of mankind, but only to contradict what others say"? Can we suppose that when describing him as a dishonest sophist and a preacher of intolerance, Grimm did not wish to damage the persecuted author in the opinion of the powerful personages to whom his communications were secretly addressed?

The *Letters from the Country* of the Counsellor Tronchin appeared only in December 1763. On the 15th of December, the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire*, who professed to feel such horror for intolerance, and to defend the rights of the preacher of new doctrines to introduce them into a country in defiance of the established laws or will of the sovereign, launched forth into enthusiastic praises of a work designed to justify the condemnation, without trial, of an author

accused of heterodox opinions; and the rejection, without consideration, of an appeal made by a large and representative body of citizens for the calling of a general Council to examine the justice of a sentence passed by an irresponsible Chamber against a man who had not been heard in his own defence.

"Several citizens and burghers of the republic," wrote Grimm, "had made representations to the Council upon the subject of the proceedings against J. J. Rousseau. And as happens generally, hot-headed people became excited and there seemed reason to fear some disturbance of public tranquillity. M. Tronchin, Procureur-Général, published his *Lettres écrites de la Campagne*, where he discussed from the point of view of a simple citizen the difficulties that had been raised, and which his Letters dissipate easily. Every one after reading them has decided that the Council has acted rightly. And we must perhaps recognize here the first instance of a people excited by the leaders of a cabal listening to the voice of reason."

It has been said that Rousseau answered Butta-fuoco's letter asking him to assist the Corsicans in drawing up a constitution, without publishing the honour done him. Butta-fuoco, however, must himself have spoken of the matter in Paris. In November, 1764, Grimm gives his own account of the proceeding: and endeavours to minimize the importance of the confidence and reverence shown to Rousseau, by affirming that the same proposition had been made to Diderot and Helvetius by other Corsicans.

"It is said," wrote Grimm,[1] "that Paoli, chief of the Corsicans, has just written to J. J. Rousseau asking him for laws for his nation. Here is a proceeding which will singularly flatter the late, so-called citizen of Geneva (*le ci-devant, soi-disant citoyen de Genève*), and which, if it does not secure for the Corsicans the laws they desire, will give us no doubt a new and *piquant* book by Jean Jacques. *It is affirmed that*

[1] *Corr. Litt.*, vol. vi. p. 113.

other Corsicans have applied to other persons with the same object. The best plan would certainly seem to be to seek the counsel of the most enlightened men in Europe; to compare their advices, and to choose, or to compile from them a plan of government. What a splendid task Paoli would here propose:—it would be one of the finest enterprises of the century. To a project like this all Europe would wish success. For there is not a single man of honour whose interests are not associated with the success of this brave people in emancipating itself from the detestable and oppressive government of their Genoese tyrants."

The Corsican patriots did not take the hint, which the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* no doubt felt sure would reach them indirectly. They did not invite any philosopher but the author of the *Contrat Social* to assist them in drawing up a constitution.

For this reason, and also because Rousseau failed to act up to the character given him of a lover of notoriety, and made no capital out of this distinguished mark of confidence and reverence shown him, Grimm, later on, was pleased to circulate the falsehood that the proposal had never been seriously made, but that it was a practical joke played upon the vain and credulous Rousseau.

"It is amusing," wrote Grimm on the 15th Jan., 1765, "to see M. Rousseau kindling the fire of revolt in his own country in the same moment when he is making himself the legislator of Corsica. *But it passes for certain to-day that this letter he received as from Paoli was the work of a practical joker, who was making fun of him.*"

Under Frederic's protection at Motiers Travers, Rousseau, though exiled from France and Geneva, was still a conspicuous figure in Europe, and still threw the Encyclopædists into the shade. The effort was now made to hunt him out of this place of refuge where he could not be reached by open persecutors; and the plan followed was to excite the pastors of Neuchatel, and through them the populace, by spreading the report that here was

an abominable atheist and blasphemer whom the sceptical Prussian king sheltered in this province to the scandal and disgrace of its God-fearing and self-respecting inhabitants.

On the 15th January, 1765, Grimm, trusting to the difficulty of obtaining the *Letters from the Mountain*, endeavoured to represent that work as an effort made by an author, safe in the neighbouring territory of a foreign state, to stir up civil war in his own country.

"Jean Jacques Rousseau," he wrote, "was treated in the *Lettres de la Campagne* with great consideration: but he is not a man to follow the example of his adversaries in anything. His reply is a masterpiece of eloquence, sarcasm, bitterness, rage, extravagance, bad faith, folly, and atrocity; never did any one make such a bad use of his talents! In his first letters, he seeks to prove that he is a Christian: and his reasonings about the Christian religion serve to demonstrate its absurdity. He gives us a dissertation upon miracles, which may be compared with that of David Hume, if one wishes to realize the difference between a sophist and a philosopher. He says that he believes in Jesus Christ, *in spite* of his miracles. He says, in imitation of Père Berruyer, that Jesus Christ was a man of pleasure and excellent company. He says that the gospels are divine books, and he makes a catalogue of all the scandalous and absurd things the books contain. He upholds the doctrine that the Christian religion does not suit the human race in general, nor any particular state either: and maintains that this doctrine proves him a good Christian. He pretends that he only wrote the *Profession of Faith of a Vicar of Savoy* to save the Christian religion from falling under blows, from all directions, inflicted by philosophers. He counts upon it that the Parliament of Paris will repent for having misunderstood his object; and for having condemned a book with which he hopes one day to efface the faults of his whole life; by presenting it to God, on the Judgment Day; with these words: 'I have sinned, but I have published this

writing.' Assuredly, if Jesus Christ should find Himself on His Father's right hand, when Jean Jacques honours them with his presence, He will owe him a word of thanks for all the services he has rendered Him. Jean Jacques is then indubitably a Christian : but after a new fashion, which allows every deist and sceptic to be a Christian, in the same sense as he is. You will find in these Letters a very entangled eulogy of the King of Prussia ; a touching apostrophe addressed to George Keith, that is to say, to my Lord-Maréchal—but, before all things, a curious *naïveté* about his personal merits, and about the respect and gratitude the human race owes him. He says, also, that Cicero was a mere rhetorician : that Voltaire is an Aristophanes : and that he, Rousseau, is a Socrates ! All this would be crazy, if it were not atrocious. I am not severe. I do not reproach M. Rousseau on account of the contempt with which he treats the Council of Geneva ; I do not reproach him with the violence, satire, and ill-temper which characterize his general tone ; which respects nothing, and which belabours the ministers whom he should for his own sake have treated with consideration. *One act of hypocrisy the more can cost this author nothing.* Otherwise one might compare the *Letters from the Mountain* with the *Dedicatory Epistle*, which he addressed to the Republic ten years ago : and find there an amusing contrast. What I reproach M. Rousseau with, and what appears to me criminal, is that he treats the fundamental constitution of his country in the same way as the Christian religion—that is to say, he professes that the constitution should be upheld : and then commences to demolish it, from top to bottom ! Here, it is no longer a question of absurd and religious opinions, which have no immediate influence on public happiness ; *it means nothing less than arming citizen against citizen. The author declares frankly at the end of his book that he believes the bourgeoisie has a right, and is called upon, to take up arms against the Council ; and all because*

it has burnt Emile! This work has caused a ferment at Geneva, truly frightful to contemplate; and of which one cannot predict the results.

"The ordinary device of a sophist is to insist upon the strong, whilst ignoring the weak sides of an argument. This is the favourite method of Jean Jacques. When this bad faith is used in the discussion of empty questions, one may seduce by it the vulgar, whilst displeasing wise minds, very little touched by an eloquence used only to establish paradoxes: all this has little importance. *But when this bad faith, and these talents are employed to trouble the peace of even the smallest state, they become frightful and horrible. If there be anywhere on earth such a crime as high treason, it is found certainly in attacking the fundamental constitution of a state with the arms M. Rousseau has employed to overthrow the constitution of his country.*[1] These Letters are not yet known sufficiently in Paris to allow one to speak of their success; but, as a rule, people who read them pronounce them tiresome. One has to know the constitution of Geneva, and even anecdotes current in the Republic, to feel the venom of these sophistries; those who do not know where the blows strike home, have found the book insipid. The author's tone is very conciliatory towards the French, and the Parliaments; not a single word about the fine denunciation of Maître Joly de Fleury. Plainly, M. Rousseau has not renounced all hope of returning to France. But he deceives himself; the *Letters from the Mountain* will not bring about the repeal of the sentence of arrest.

"The conduct of this celebrated man is very strange. He made himself a Catholic in his youth: and at forty-

[1] "Lorsque cette mauvaise foi et ces talents sont employés à troubler le repos même du plus petit état, ils deviennent affreux et horribles. S'il y a un crime de lèze-majesté sur la terre, c'est certainement celui d'attaquer la constitution fondamentale d'un état avec les armes que M. Rousseau a employées pour renverser celle de sa patrie."—*C. L.*, vol. vi. pp. 176–182.

five he re-made himself a Protestant: and pretends that when he did this, he performed a very courageous action. He has cultivated letters all his life, and afterwards has denounced them, as the source of corruption. He has written many comedies: bad ones, it is true, and which he had corrected by Marivaux,—and afterwards he has written against the theatre. After his return from Venice, he was so little touched by Italian music that he sang the operas of Lulli with delight, and wrote himself an opera entirely in the French style called *Les Muses Galantes*, but which was not found good enough to be played: and some years later he declared that the French never had any music: and that if they had any, it would be so much the worse for them. Ten years ago he gave the constitution of his country for the masterpiece of the human mind: and to-day he treats it as a masterpiece of iniquity and oppression. He writes to-day against miracles: and by a singular chance, he judicially testified to a miracle performed by the Bishop of Annecy in Savoy. My dear friend Jean Jacques, you overdo your mockery of the human race! You may be right in treating us as imbeciles, but if you incessantly tell us it is night at noonday, in the end a clever man will be found to tell you it is noonday: and you will lose your credit. A worthy man (*un homme de bien*)[1] who had not read the *Letters from the Mountain*, but who had heard of the troubles excited by this book in Geneva, said that the following discourse should be addressed to Jean Jacques:—

"'You have no doubt deserved well of your country, which you have done honour to by your talents; and perhaps your fellow-citizens have not shown you all the consideration you deserved, but Cimon, Themistocles, Aristides, and Miltiades, were treated with more indignity than you have suffered by the Athenians, and they uttered no complaint. Themistocles was almost the founder of Athens, and you did not found Geneva.

[1] Diderot. The letter is in his collected works, vol. xviii. p. 139.

You have not, like Miltiades, beaten at sea and on land the great Asiatic monarch: if you have neither the warlike nor civil virtues of Cimon, you would wish to pass for as virtuous and as just a man as Aristides. But when these brave and glorious citizens were ignominiously banished from their town, torn from the bosom of their families, they went forth wishing their ungrateful countrymen might love and serve her better than they had done.[1] Not one of them avenged himself by arming the citizen against the citizen, and by making blood stain the streets and market-places and temples.[2] And if but one drop of blood were shed, one citizen slain in Geneva, would the injury done to *Emile* deserve this horrible reparation? I know that you have eloquence enough to show me that if Themistocles, Aristides and Miltiades did what was right, so have you acted rightly: and I feel that I should require as much art as you have to answer you: but what I feel also is that whilst so much talent is needed for your apology, none is needed for that of Themistocles and Miltiades. The greatest efforts of reasoning are required to prove you innocent, but I find the others innocent, just, and virtuous without having to think about it.'

"J. J. Rousseau would not agree" (continues Grimm himself, by way of comment upon the 'worthy man's' letter) "about the relative importance of the services rendered. What were the victories of Themistocles and Miltiades to his writings? He claims that he has made his country illustrious throughout Europe. Before him, the name of Genevese was a sort of reproach. Geneva has become illustrious and respectable only since she gave birth to J. J. Rousseau! His modesty is on a level with his services."

[1] As a matter of fact these are the very expressions employed by Rousseau in the letter when he resigns his title of citizen of Geneva.

[2] No blood stained the streets, market-places, or temples of Geneva during this dispute. "On a bien trompé la cour," wrote Voltaire, "quand on lui a dit que tout était en feu à Genève; jamais il n'en eu de dispute plus tranquille."

Passing over the discourse of "un homme de bien" who by his own admission had not read the *Letters from the Mountain*, and the account of the strange conduct of this "celebrated man," whose enemies we know by this time have at all costs to maintain their theory that he is always in contradiction with himself—let us see, by comparing Grimm's account of the *Letters from the Mountain* with the Letters themselves, whether the work, as Rousseau wrote it, justifies the assertions that "if there be anywhere on earth such a crime as high treason, it is found certainly in attacking the fundamental constitution of a state with the arms Rousseau employed to overthrow the constitution of his country." Did Rousseau try to overthrow the constitution of his country in the *Letters from the Mountain?* Did he try to arm citizen against citizen? Did he declare frankly at the end of his book that the bourgeoisie had a right, and was called upon, to take up arms against the Council, and all because it had burnt *Emile?*

To commence with, the author of the *Lettres de la Montagne* does not attack the Constitution of Geneva, but condemns its violation by the usurpation of the Lesser Council of the power to put interpretations of its own upon the laws it was appointed to administer. As for the true Constitution of Geneva, which Rousseau urges the citizens of the state to perserve intact, he says of it precisely what he said of it in his *Dedication to the Discourse upon Inequality;* and the "amusing contrast" Grimm discovers between this *Dedicatory Epistle* and the *Letters from the Mountain* is like the other contradictions that are attributed to Rousseau, the result of misrepresenting his perfectly lucid and consistent application of the same principles to altered circumstances.

"Men of good sense," writes Rousseau,[1] "tell you, 'We are the most free of all people.' Other men equally sensible declare 'We live under a sort of slavery.' Who is in the right? Both are right, but in different senses.

[1] *Lettres de la Montagne*, Seconde Partie.

Nothing can be more free than your legitimate state: nothing more servile than your actual one.

"Your laws hold their authority from yourselves: you recognize only those you yourselves have made: you only pay the dues you have imposed upon yourselves: you elect the chiefs who govern you: they have only the right to judge you in accordance with prescribed laws. In your General Council, you are the legislators, sovereigns, and have no human power above your own; you ratify treaties: decide questions of war or peace: your magistrates themselves treat you, as members of this Council, as 'very honoured and sovereign lords.' Here is your liberty.

"Now for your servitude. The body charged by you to execute your laws, has made itself their interpreter and the supreme and final umpire. It makes the laws speak to suit itself; it may put them to silence; it may violate them, without your being able to restrain it: it is above the law. The chiefs elected by you have, independently of your choice, other powers which they do not hold from you: and which they extend at the expense of those they do hold at your hands. Limiting their own election to a small number of men, all in the same class, holding the same principles, having the same interests, with an appearance of liberty, your power of choice has no free action. . . . One must not confound independence and liberty: the two things are so different that they mutually exclude each other. When every one does what pleases himself, he often does what displeases others, and this cannot be called a free State. Liberty consists less in doing one's own will than in remaining uncompelled to obey the will of others: *it also consists in being unable to compel others to do our will.* Whoever is a master, is not free: to reign is to obey. Your magistrates know that: they can be servile in order to retain command. Where there is common liberty, no one has a right to do what the liberty of another forbids him to do. Liberty without

justice is a contradiction in terms. That is to say, *there is no liberty without laws, and no liberty when any one is above the law.* Even in the state of nature man is free only by virtue of the natural law, which is the same for all. A free people obeys, but it does not serve ; it has its chiefs, but not its masters; it obeys the laws, but it only obeys the laws, and by force of the laws it does not obey men. All the limits that, in a republic, are placed on the power of magistrates have for their purpose the safeguarding of the laws from any attempt of ministers to make themselves superior to the law: their function is to protect, not to violate them. *A people is free, never mind what may be its form of government, when in those who govern, it sees, not men, but the organs of the law.* Liberty depends upon the empire of law : it reigns and perishes with this authority. I know nothing more certain than that.

" *You have good and wise laws, in themselves first of all, and further in that they are laws of your own making.* But the work of the legislator is altered and destroyed in one way only—when the depositaries of the law betray their trust, and make themselves obeyed in the name of the laws, which they themselves disobey. Then the worst thing results from the best: and the law intended as a safeguard against tyranny, becomes itself the most fatal sort of tyranny. This is precisely what the right of representation was intended in your edicts to prevent. This right gave you inspection, not upon legislation, but upon the administration of the law ; and your magistrates, all powerful in the name of the law, sole masters to propose to the legislator new laws, are subject to its judgments if they administer wrongly those already established. *By this article alone your government, although having some defects, and even considerable ones, becomes the best that has ever existed, for what better government could be found than one where all the parties are perfectly balanced—where individuals cannot transgress the laws because they are*

controlled by judges: and where the judges cannot misapply the laws because they are controlled by the people?"

Rousseau goes on to show that the right of representation possessed by the citizens and burghers of Geneva, in other words, the right constituted by an appeal made by a large number of citizens from the decisions of the Lesser Council to the General Council, could be exercised in two ways: either as an appeal for some change in existing laws, or as a complaint against the administration of established laws. In the first case, Rousseau recognized the right of the Council to the *droit négatif;* in the second case, he denied that this right existed.

"This distinction once established," he writes, "the Council, to whom these representations are addressed, must consider them from different points of view according to the subject of complaint. In those states where the government and laws are securely established, one must avoid as much as possible any disturbance of existing regulations. And especially so in the case of small republics, where constitutional changes are dangerous. The aversion to new regulations is generally well founded; it is especially so in your own case, where you can only lose by changes, and where in any case the advantages that might be gained by new laws would probably be outweighed by the dangers to the constitution. In this position, when the citizen or burgher has given his opinion, he has done his duty, and he should have sufficient confidence in his magistrates to judge them capable of weighing the advantages of what has been proposed to them and well inclined to approve of what they believe useful to the public. Here then the law has very wisely provided that not only the establishment but even the proposal to establish, any new law, shall not pass without the consent of the Council; and here the *droit négatif* claimed by them is, in my opinion, incontestably theirs.

"But the second object, having an entirely different

character, must be differently considered. Here there is no question of any innovation : on the contrary, the question is to prevent innovations ; not to establish new laws, but to uphold those that exist. Here is what the citizens and burghers, whose great interest it is to prevent any change, have in view in their representations ; the duty they fulfil, the right they exercise, is to protest when the laws are unjustly administered. It is against reason and public decency to wish to extend the *droit négatif* of the Councils in such a case as this. All the difficulty here is in a question of facts. Has the law been transgressed or has it not ? The citizens and burghers say it has. The magistrates deny it. In such a case, I ask you, can anything be less reasonable than the *droit négatif* the magistrates claim ? They are told, 'you have transgressed the law ;' they reply, 'we have not transgressed it ;' and, judges in their own case, pronounce themselves justified without evidence, by their own affirmations !"

Does Rousseau decry or attack the constitution of his country when he maintains that it is *the best that ever existed ?* Is he seeking to overthrow it when he points out the usurpation by a group of magistrates of powers the constitution never gave them ? Is he guilty of high treason, when he urges that these constitutional rights should not be parted with, and can be defended by constitutional means ?

But in the defence of these rights, does he seek to arm citizens against citizens ? And at the close of his work, does he say that the bourgeoisie has a right, and is called upon, to take up arms against the Council ? On the contrary, insisting upon the legal methods open to them by the means of public meetings and demonstrations, Rousseau warns his fellow-citizens against taking literally a phrase frequently repeated in the *Letters from the Country.* "Tout est permis dans les maux extrêmes."

" 'All is permitted, when the evils of the case have reached their head,' says several times the author of the

Letters from the Country. Even if it were true that all means are permitted, all means are not expedient. When an excessive tyranny puts those who suffer from it above the law, even so, the means they use to destroy it should have some chance of success. Can they really wish to drive you to this extremity? I can hardly believe it; and were it so I cannot see that any violent methods can be of use to you. In your position any false step is a fatal one, and the effort to provoke you to make it is a trap. If even for a fortnight you made yourselves the masters, at the end of that time you would be crushed for ever. Whatever your magistrates may do, whatever the author of the letters may say, methods of violence are not those which belong to a just cause. Without believing that they deliberately labour to drive you to these methods, I believe they would be only too pleased to see you take them; and I, for my part, would not like to see you regard, even as a last resource, a measure that would rob you infallibly of the power to employ any other. Justice and the law are on your side. These allies, I know, are feeble against interest and intrigue, but they are the only ones left you; hold them fast to the end. . . . How should I dare say more? Deliberate with your fellow citizens and do not count voices without weighing them. Distrust turbulent youth, insolent wealth, and venal poverty—salutary counsels will not come from these directions. Consult those whom an honest mediocrity secures against the seductions of ambition and the interests of penury; those who, in an honoured old age, find the crown of a blameless life; those who by long experience are well versed in public affairs; those who, free from political ambition, are contented with the rank of private citizens; in short, those who, never having had any other motive than the good of their country and the maintenance of the laws, deserve by their virtues the esteem of the public and the confidence of their equals. But above all things, keep united; you are lost and helpless if you remain divided amongst yourselves. And why should this

be when such great common interests unite you? How, when so much danger threatens, can base jealousies and small passions gain a hearing? Are they worth considering at such a cost, and do you wish that some future day your children, weeping over their chains, may say—'Here is the result of the dissensions amongst our fathers'? In one word, concord is of more importance than counsel; the choice of the part you will take is not the first thing; what goes before everything else is that you should all take the same side; by that reason alone it will become the best, and you will do what is right if you act together. Here is my counsel, sir, and I end where I began. When obeying your request, I have fulfilled my last duty to my country. Now I take my farewell of those who inhabit it; there remains no further unkindness they can do me, and on my side there is no other service I can render them."

Grimm's statement then, that the author of the *Letters from the Mountain* was guilty of the crime of high treason because he endeavoured to overthrow the constitution of his country and to provoke civil war, was not a severe or an unjust criticism: it was simply a falsehood. A falsehood of the same stamp was the assertion that Rousseau's reasonings about the Christian religion serve to demonstrate its absurdity; and that he says, "*in imitation of the Père Berruyer*," that Jesus Christ was a man of pleasure and of excellent company.

"*I do not desire to take the tone of the Père Berruyer*," wrote the author of the 'Letters from the Mountain,' "*which I do not like, and consider even in very bad taste;* yet I cannot prevent myself saying that one of the things that most attracts me in the character of Jesus is not only His mildness and simplicity, but also His graciousness and sweet tolerance—one might almost say His elegance. A preacher of Geneva, called Henri de la Marre, upheld once in the pulpit that it was a sin to go to a wedding more joyously than Jesus Christ went to His death. A Jansenist curé also held that a

wedding festival was an invention of the devil. Some one objected that Jesus had attended a wedding feast, and that He had even deigned to perform His first miracle to prolong its gaiety. Somewhat embarrassed, the curé growled : 'It is not His best action.' (Ce n'est pas ce qu'il fit de mieux.)"

There can be no doubt that the rumours which followed Grimm's libellous and mendacious account of the *Letters from the Mountain* were the sources of the disquietude and anger of the Neuchatel ministers, who felt themselves exposed to the taunt that they countenanced the habitation amongst their flock of an enemy of the Christian religion, and of an atrocious demagogue, who sought to destroy the foundations of order, and to arm citizens against each other.

What is worthy of remark, however, is the complete failure of the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* to convince the reigning Sovereigns amongst his *abonnés* that "if any one on earth was guilty of the crime of high treason, the author of the *Letters from the Mountain* was." It is in connection with this article that the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha wrote to protest against Grimm's treatment of Rousseau. We have not the letters of Louise Dorothée, which, no doubt, Grimm was careful to destroy; but his replies, found by M. Tourneux at Saxe-Gotha, show some of the reproaches addressed to him by his patroness.

Thus, it is evident that Louise Dorothée had said she discovered nothing atrocious in the *Letters from the Mountain;* that she did not consider it a proof of bad faith that at sixteen years of age he had testified to his belief in a miracle, and that at fifty years of age he had ceased to believe in miracles. We find, too, that she had warned Grimm that this attack upon a man he had shown favour to, would offend Frederic; and that if Lord-Marshal Keith saw the article he would be extremely indignant. We discover also that Grimm had not sent the *Letters from the Mountain* to the Duchess, but

that she had herself purchased a copy ; and, finally, we detect Grimm in the malicious falsehood of attributing to Rousseau the mythical work *Les Princes*, wherein it was alleged all royal personages were attacked.

"You see, madame, with what entire confidence I take advantage of your goodness, and open my thoughts to your Highness with all the truth of one who makes his full confession. Yes, I know that Milord Marshal is the friend of the King and also of M. Rousseau ; and if I wrote to Milord I should respect his friendship. But I am writing for the King, and I owe him the truth, or what appears to me true ; for, after all, that is every one's position. I hope that the King will deign not to be angry with me for my frankness, and not to stir up trouble for me. I have this confidence in him : he did not show any of my sheets to M. d'Alembert whilst he was there ; this was a proof of delicacy I felt very much, and I hope he will show the same consideration for me in the case of M. Helvétius, and also not attempt to compromise me in the opinion of Milord Maréchal, who is one of the most estimable men I know. M. Helvétius leaves on the 14th. He will bring your Highness the *Letters from the Country*. I am not surprised that your Highness finds nothing atrocious in the *Letters from the Mountain*. One needs to be a native of Geneva to appreciate all its malice, but it is not less true that in this Letter the whole constitution of Geneva is demolished, with a skill all the more culpable that the author employs the tone of a good citizen and a disinterested critic ; and nothing is more certain than that for the last two months the little republic is in a state of combustion which excites pity, and that this book will have destroyed, for the time being, public happiness and tranquillity. It has served to sow mistrust and jealousy between the different orders in the state, which torment the sufferers from them all the more, because the objects are merely chimerical, and that no real grievances are attached to them. When this feverish spirit takes

possession of men, great catastrophes are generally near. The wisest men in Geneva are full of apprehension, and say, 'God help our poor Republic!' I am convinced that if M. Rousseau had written this book against the canton of Berne, he would have run the risk of losing his head on the scaffold. But he knew very well that the twenty-five tyrants of Geneva he paints as so enterprising and redoubtable, were poor creatures, without credit or power, who might be played with fearlessly. The first of his Letters amused me greatly. The dissertation upon miracles is unique in its originality and humour. But I pointed out that, by a singular accident, the author had testified to his own belief in a miracle. I know that the Bishop of Annecy took it into his head some thirty or forty years ago to work I don't quite know what miracle; that a declaration was signed by all the eye-witnesses of this prodigy, and that M. Rousseau, then in Savoy, and religious, was amongst these witnesses. There is not necessarily bad faith in this, I admit: but it is an amusing accident. I agree with your Highness that the greatest philosophers sometimes emit sophistries, but I forgive any sophistry if it be uttered in good faith. I see at least in the writings of Voltaire and Hume an object. But in the writings of M. Rousseau I see, with a great deal of talent, persistent bad faith. He leads me by tortuous and secret paths, and I never feel safe with him. Where does he wish to lead me? I cannot say. And he does not know himself. What he cares to do is to persuade me that I am unhappy, and unhappy without hope of cure. If M. Rousseau ever becomes Pope, he will strike out from the seven sacraments of the Church the one of pardon, for he will never consent to let repentance have any fruit of grace. I am told that a new work of M. Rousseau's has just appeared, entitled *Les Princes*. I am in despair at not being able to send it to your Highness at present, for the inquisition in this country with respect to books is so severe during the last eighteen months that we only

receive all these interesting works very late, and no money one can pay makes any difference. I was offered the *Letters from the Mountain* for twelve crowns, a fortnight ago. I confess I hesitated to pay four times the price of it, and I did well, since your Highness has received them from some one else."

Evidently Rousseau had been warned that a mischievous rumour was in circulation, attributing to him a work of an objectionable character, entitled, *Les Princes*. On the 14th March, 1765, he wrote to the Professor de Félice:

"I have not written a work entitled *Les Princes;* I have not seen it. I doubt if such a work exists. I understand clearly from what workshop comes this invention, as well as many other falsehoods, and I find my enemies worthy of the arms they employ."

Two months after Grimm's letter of the 7th March, we have another letter from Grimm to the Duchess, which shows that, in the interval, Louise Dorothée has written again upon the subject of the account of the *Letters from the Mountain* given by Grimm. Evidently the displeasure of this patroness has been expressed even more forcibly, and Grimm, in alarm, seeks to mollify her by flatteries.[1]

Grimm's comment upon the libel woven out of materials he had supplied to Voltaire, appeared in the same month as Rousseau's letter to Duchesne, reproducing *Le Sentiment des Citoyens*.

On the 1st February, 1765, the *Correspondance Littéraire* contained this notice:—

"A pamphlet has appeared at Geneva, entitled *Sentiments des Citoyens*, upon the *Lettres de la Montagne*. In this pamphlet, M. Rousseau is reproached with leading a life of debauchery with his housekeeper; and with having exposed their children at the door of a hospital! How abominable! *(Quelle horreur!)* This paper is said to be by M. Vernes: a minister of the

[1] See page 82.

gospel, who is treated like a bad schoolboy in the *Lettres de la Montagne;* and who replies by treating M. Rousseau like a scoundrel. M. Rousseau has judged it advisable to have this little libel reprinted in Paris, adding to it a note where he simply denies the facts stated. People who do not take affirmations for proofs, will say that to deny the truth of an accusation is not to refute it. And one does not see what was the object of sending to Paris a disgusting libel which would never otherwise have been heard of there."

On the 15th May, 1765, the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* endeavours to throw doubt on the reality of the attack made upon Rousseau by the populace of Motiers. In October, he had related the event in a manner calculated to excite contempt for the victim of the outrage.

"Although," he wrote,[1] "Jean Jacques' craze is to be no philosopher, the priests give him the honours of one in his own despite: and treat him accordingly. News from Neuchatel tells us that the pastor Montmollin, his dear friend, who admitted him to the holy table, two years ago, has just made his parishioners kick him out of Motiers Travers (vient de le faire chasser par ses paroissiens de Motiers Travers à coup de pied)."

A month later, Grimm has changed his story: Jean Jacques is an impostor: and the attack supposed to have made necessary his flight from Motiers was invented, or imagined by him, in order to render himself interesting.

"It appears," wrote Grimm,[2] "that the first account of the insults offered M. Rousseau at Motiers Travers were much exaggerated; and that the conformity between his case and that of the first martyr, St. Stephen, is not very well established. If one can rely upon the results of the judicial inquiry, the whole business reduces itself to there having been some pebbles thrown at his windows by tipsy passers-by, who, without any designs against him, chanced to assemble outside his door. With an

[1] Vol. vi. p. 405. [2] *C. L.*, vol. vi. p. 433.

ardent imagination, one doesn't find it difficult to transform pebbles into a hail of huge stones; and one or two tipsy men into a band of assassins. The poor Jean Jacques was really too badly off at Motiers to stay there longer. Had there been no other trial than to listen, as he did regularly for three years, to the sermons of his pastor, Montmollin, this penance sufficed to make his residence a hell upon earth. It seems that the terrible *ennui* inevitably resulting from these continual duties, the impossibility of concealing it, and of always keeping up the same show of esteem in daily relations with a simpleton, were the original causes of the coldness between M. Rousseau and his pastor; and that the wrath of M. de Montmollin had been smouldering a long time before the *Letters from the Mountain* kindled it to flame. The outcome of all this squabbling is less amusing than are the details. M. Rousseau, bored to death by the active charity of his pastor, seized the opportunity afforded by the noise made at his door by a few drunken men, to leave Motiers Travers; and take up his abode in a little island belonging to the canton of Berne. Their excellencies of Berne were not willing to allow the unhappy Jean Jacques to remain in their territory: and ordered him to depart. It is alleged that he wrote imploring them to put him in prison until the spring: and engaging to keep himself; to receive, and to write no letters: and to receive no visitors without the consent of his guardians: asking only for a garden to walk in, and promising to leave the country when the warm season returned. The reply to this deplorable request was a fresh order to quit the canton of Berne at once."

It has now been proved that in these three years of exile at Motiers Travers, when Rousseau produced two works that hold an important place in the complete exposition of his philosophy of life—the *Letter to Christopher de Beaumont* and the *Letters from the Mountain*—he was subject to no mania of suspicions,

MOTIERS-TRAVERS. (From a photograph.)
(La maison où habita Rousseau en face de l'arbre.)

In 1897 the wooden gallery round the balcony, where the stones were thrown against Rousseau's window, still remained as in 1765.

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and haunted by no spectres of a diseased imagination, when he recognized that, behind the magistrates and religious doctors who were his open persecutors, worked incessantly his secret enemies, whose methods he did not fathom, but whose object he correctly understood was to separate him from protectors, sympathizers, and friends: and to build up for him the false reputation of a sophist and an impostor.

Up to the date of the outrage perpetrated upon him by the populace at Motiers, Rousseau had remained unhurt in spirit by his persecutors. But now, made to feel himself, for the first time, held up to the hatred of those on whose instinctive justice he had relied, he *was* hurt: and more than hurt—the first shock of a profound discouragement overwhelmed him. "*The spectacle of the hatred of the people*," he says, "*tore my heart.*" And the torn heart he took away with him from Motiers Travers, in September 1765, was never again made whole.

CHAPTER III

THE LAST ACT—THE CAUSES OF THE QUARREL WITH DAVID HUME

Oct. 1765—*May* 1767

Rousseau left Bienne on the 25th October, 1765, intending to make Strasburg only a halting-place; his intention, until different difficulties arose to alter it, was to accept Frederic's offer of a refuge near himself in the vicinity of Berlin.

Looking back to the position with our foreknowledge of events it seems clear that had Rousseau been permitted to carry through this intention he would have effectually escaped from the clutches of his secret enemies; so that the tragedy of the last ten years of his life would have been avoided. From this point of view it appears to us deplorable, and to Rousseau himself, in his dark and friendless days, it appeared suspicious, that the counsels which drew him back from the path to security he had entered upon were given by the Countess de Boufflers and by Madame de Verdelin. There can be no question, however, that this advice was honestly given and had sound practical reasons to support it in the physical infirmities of this way-weary exile, which rendered such a long journey by post-chaise full of risk and torture for him.

He arrived at Strasburg on the 4th November—worn out and exhausted by what he described as "the most hateful journey he had ever undergone."

"It is as impossible for me in my present state of health," he wrote to his friend Dupeyrou,[1] "to go to Potsdam, as to go to China; and I hardly know what is

[1] See *Corresp.*, Nov. 5, 1765.

to become of me. For it is not likely they will leave me long in peace here.[1] When one has arrived at my plight, one does not make projects: one has but to summon resolution to endure whatever befalls one, and to bend one's head to the heavy yoke of necessity. I have written to Milord Marshal. I should wish to stay here until I receive his reply. But if they expel me, I must go to the other side of the Rhine to seek some humanity, some hospitality. If I find none anywhere, well, I must school myself to do without it! Good-bye, —my 'host' no longer, but my friend always. George Keith and you still bind me to life: but such ties are not easily broken: I embrace you."

Here was the man of whom the kind-hearted Diderot said that he was not to be pitied when thus hunted from place to place, because he travelled with his Mistress, Notoriety.

But in a few days Rousseau's spirits brightened. Far from showing any disposition to expel him, the Marshal de Contades, Governor of Alsace, displayed eagerness to serve him, and all the townsfolk of Strasburg treated him as a guest it was their delight to honour. The "torn heart" he had brought away from Motiers was consoled by this universal manifestation of esteem and affection.

"Reassure yourself, my dear friend," he wrote to Dupeyrou,[2] "and reassure all those who thought I was exposed to danger here. I receive on every side, proofs of goodwill: and every one having authority in the town, and in the province, unites in showing me favour. . . . You will have seen that I have given up the idea of going to Berlin, at least for this winter, unless Milord Marshal, to whom I have written, decides differently. But I know him: he desires my repose before anything else: or, rather, that is the one thing he desires. By my present intention I shall pass the winter here. Nothing can exceed the kindness, esteem,

[1] Strasburg being French territory, Rousseau was liable to arrest.
[2] *Correspondence*, Nov. 17, 1765.

and even reverence, shown me by every one; from the Governor to the humblest people."

Unfortunately for Rousseau's idea of spending the winter at Strasburg and in the spring continuing his journey to Berlin, he fell ill. His wish to respond cordially to the festivals got up in his honour by the inhabitants of Strasburg condemned him to a method of life to which he was unaccustomed; and then the climate was rigorous. The result of late hours, and exposure to cold, was a more than usually painful attack of his constitutional malady. Left weak, and indisposed for all fresh exertion, the poor philosopher grew alarmed at the thought of what might await him near Frederic. The prophet's zeal was quenched in him. He felt his day's work was done; and now what he needed was some retreat where he might pass the evening of his life hidden from the world's favours and cruelties.

Whilst he was in this mood he received a letter from Madame de Verdelin which seemed to promise him the tranquillity he was pining for. Already on several occasions it had been proposed to him to trust to the promises made on his behalf to the Countess de Boufflers by the Scotch philosopher and historian David Hume, who offered to find him a retreat in England. Madame de Verdelin had made Hume's acquaintance later on; and to her also these offers had been repeated. It is so necessary to understand the reasons of Rousseau's confidence in Hume, that it will be well to give here Madame de Boufflers' first letter, written in 1762, some few weeks after the decree of the Parliament of Paris compelled Rousseau's flight from France. On the 14th July, 1762, she had written to him :—

"I send you, sir, the postscript of a letter I have just received from Mr. Hume. I have translated and, no doubt, disfigured it; but it will show you his sentiments towards you, and those of the King of England, and of the nation. I hope that the high esteem they have for you in this country will make you change your

resolution : you could not choose a better country of exile than England, from every point of view."

Mr. Hume's postscript, 1st July, 1762 :—

"I was at this point in my letter, madame, when I received the one you honour me with, dated 14th June. Heavens! madame, how deeply I regret my absence from London at this time, since it robs me of the pleasure of showing you my extreme respect for you, and for any recommendation of yours; and at the same time, the esteem, I had nearly said the veneration, with which the virtue and genius of M. Rousseau inspire me. I take the liberty of assuring you, madame, that there is not a man in Europe of whom I have a higher idea; and to whom I should be more flattered to render any service. As his reputation is securely established in England, I have no doubt that every one would zealously testify in every possible way to the respect felt for him. I respect the greatness of soul which leads him to reject obligation and dependence. I flatter myself I resemble him in these ways : yet as my relationships with several persons of high rank allow it, I will not delay a moment in writing to inform them of the honour M. Rousseau does us by choosing our country as his refuge. We have the happiness to possess a young king who respects letters; and I hope that M. Rousseau would not disdain the favours of a great monarch, who knows how to appreciate his merits. The French nation will soon regret the loss of so great a man ; and will learn at the same time that it has cause to be ashamed of having lost him through its own fault. We had hoped here that philosophical liberty had made more progress in this kingdom. Authors who have in their writings used this liberty, may hesitate in future to trust their persons to a people professing these narrow maxims; and which appears to ignore the indulgence naturally due to foreigners. I confess, madame, that this reflexion causes me personally some uneasiness; but I cannot resign myself to the thought that I shall remain condemned to

admire you from afar: I should regret it too much, had I to part with the hope I have cherished of enjoying your conversation and personal acquaintanceship soon."

Here, now, is Madame de Verdelin's letter of the 10th October, 1765,[1] where Rousseau is again assured of Hume's desire to be of use to him, and of the advantages waiting for him in England. Madame de Verdelin's letter is dated from the Abbaye de Panthémon. She is a little behindhand in her news of events—the lapidation of Motiers had taken place on the 6th September, and Rousseau had left Motiers on the 10th.

"Since I came here, I have heard about the outrages of the people of Motiers. I could hardly believe it, but your letter, which I received the day before yesterday, removes all doubt. I am glad you have safely reached your island, but I confess I would rather you were further away from those monsters. Mr. Hume, whom I met yesterday, thinks as I do. I cannot tell you with how much sensibility he interests himself in everything that concerns you. When I told him of the wish I have that you could be in England, he told me that he would make inquiries about a pleasant locality and situation where you might find a small house to suit you. . . . After having discussed all this, he told me that my Lord Walpole (*sic*) had an estate four leagues from London, in the forest of Richmond, on the borders of the Thames. He went to consult with him, and find out if he knew of anything that might suit you. Milord has, as it happens, on his estate, a family, who were old servants of his father's, and who live in a house in the middle of the forest, where the man holds the post of keeper. He has just written to propose to them to take as a boarder, a Frenchman, his friend, who, on account of misfortunes, wishes to live a retired life. I would not let him give your name, so that you might reflect on it, and so that the news might not get abroad. Both these gentlemen think with me. You would have M. Walpole for a neigh-

[1] See Streckeisen-Moultou, vol. ii., letter 45, p. 543.

bour, who speaks your language, and it is understood that you would only see him if you wished to do so, and at the time and upon the terms you wished. If you desired to make yourself known, and to see people, we feel certain you could have the whole nation. On the other hand, if you wished to live in seclusion, Milord would not reveal your name. I cannot tell you into how many details Mr. Hume entered. He discussed the expenses of the journey, and I cannot either tell you all the pains he took to urge upon me to find some means of persuading you to be reasonable upon this side of the question. You will understand that he especially begged me to say nothing to you about this, but why should I hide from you proofs of affection calculated to please you? And then I must not lose the opportunity for reminding you that I have a hundred pounds at your disposal, and that my own offer is of an older date. Mr. Hume intends to write to you after the reply we expect from Lord Walpole's agent. If he has no room, or if for other reasons he could not take you, another lodging might be got in the same neighbourhood. If I were to give you their description of the country, you would think it fairyland! I ought to ask your pardon for taking these steps without consulting you, but I think the sentiment and object which dictated them will justify me in your eyes. Mr. Hume leaves at the end of next month. I wish you could let us have your reply before then. I am fascinated by the idea of the tranquillity which it seems to me you would enjoy in this country."

On the first November, after she has heard of his expulsion from the territory of Berne, she writes again[1]—

"I only received your letter of the 18th on the 27th. You will see by the date of your passport that Duke d'Aumont lost no time in sending it for you. Nothing can be kinder and more courteous than his manner when thanking me for giving him the opportunity of being

[1] Idem, Letter 45, p. 546.

useful to you. But, my neighbour,[1] is it all useless then? You start for Prussia. I am very much afflicted at the thought; everything about this journey displeases me; the time of year, the long path of return, the uncertainty if you will be allowed to go. And then the race of savants who inhabit that country are not the most honest men in the world. My neighbour, how few resemble Mr. Hume! Picture to yourself French gaiety and English good sense, and perfect frankness to boot. In truth, I only find worthy to compare with him in our continent, a few happy characters, like yourself, whom society has not spoiled. He leaves here in a few days, and you might have travelled with him. Ah, what regrets you cause me! I will not say, come back again, inasmuch as you tell me, 'I desire it, and it is my duty to take this journey.' Of course, a duty is imperative, but I can't see why it is your duty. But if there be yet time, look into this question, and examine whether it really be a duty? I do not ask you to count for anything the pleasure it would be to me to see you again, but I do ask you to recognize the boon to yourself of being in peace six months earlier .And then, a court, a king who is a philosopher, or who talks philosophy, and who is surrounded by savants—he who welcomed warmly the author of *l'Esprit*, will he be able to feel the worth of the author of *Emile?* The moral standpoint of these works is so different; and as for the king, he is so indifferent about such matters, that I confess I would rather have you lodged with the farmer I spoke to you about."

Here, now, is the third letter[2] which Rousseau must have received at Strasburg, just when his indisposition to undertake the journey to Berlin was at its strongest, the letter which evidently decided the case.

[1] Madame de Verdelin's name for Rousseau, adopted when she lived near him at Montmorency.

[2] Letter 48, p. 551.

"21*st November*, 1765.

"I am greatly pleased, my neighbour, to hear that you have been well received at Strasburg, that you are feasted there and caressed. At the same time, I exhort you to be on your guard; you know that the men who persecute you have no delicacy as to the means they use; and that if they can, they will stir up the zeal of fanatics, unless wise friends are cautious in showing sympathy. You would hardly imagine it, but the ministers would never take it upon themselves to give you a passport; and after any amount of parley, one had to address the request to the king. I don't know what may be the opinion of Milord Marshal, but if he renounces the pleasure of seeing you, out of regard for your own advantage, I do exhort you to choose a country where freedom of thought is authorized by the laws, and by the genius of the nation. I won't discuss your reasons for going to Berlin. But there is one strong reason that should keep you away. It is the welcome extended indiscriminately to any man of letters—knave or honest man, it makes no difference which; every one is made much of, if he consent to be subjugated and to praise the master. My neighbour, who has sacrificed his happiness for freedom and for truth, is not made to live at Berlin. I know a woman, who was the intimate friend of M. de Maupertuis, and she told me grief shortened his days. . . . I talked the matter over yesterday with some well-informed men who know better than I do, the condition of opinion and of men's heads in Alsace—they remained of one opinion with me, that England is the only country in Europe where you will find tranquillity."

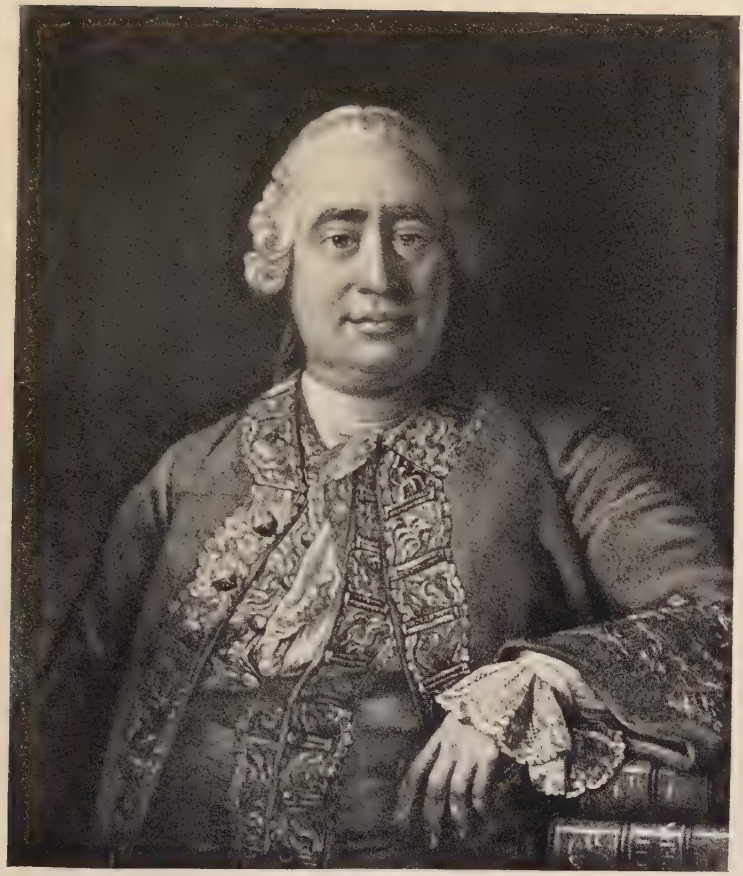
Added on to these arguments came a letter from the Lord-Marshal, advising the acceptance of Hume's proposal, as the best and most rapid means of securing the rest and tranquillity necessary for him. This decided the matter. On the 4th December, Rousseau wrote to David Hume in Paris:—

"Your kindness, sir, penetrates me with gratitude and with the sense of the honour it does me. The most appreciative reply I can make to your offers is to accept them; and this I do. In five or six days I shall start from here with the purpose of throwing myself into your arms. I follow in this the advice of Lord-Marshal Keith, my protector, friend, and father; and also the advice of Madame de Verdelin, whose enlightened goodness consoles and guides me. I may add, that I follow also the counsels of my own heart, which is pleased to owe so much to the most illustrious of my contemporaries, whose goodness outshines even his fame. I long for one thing only, a free and solitary retreat, there to end my days in peace. If your generous care secures me this, I shall enjoy at the same time the one boon I crave, and the happiness of owing it to you. I salute you, sir, with all my heart."

It has to be remembered that this letter was written to a man whom Rousseau had never seen, but whom for three years he had been hearing about as full of sympathy and veneration for him, and a zealous desire to serve him. We may accept the letter as indicating his attitude of mind towards Hume, when their personal relationships commenced.

What now, in the same period, was Hume's attitude towards Rousseau?

It has to be realized that, in December 1765, it was not precisely the same attitude as when, in July 1762, Hume had told the Countess de Boufflers, "that there was not a man in Europe of whom he had a higher idea than M. Rousseau, nor any one to whom he would be more flattered to render a service." We may take literally Hume's assurance that, in 1762, Rousseau's reputation was securely established in England; and that he would have been received there with honour had he chosen this refuge rather than Switzerland. But during three years of persecution, and when the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* had been for all this



David Hume in 1766

(From a picture painted by Ramsay.)

"His face was broad and fat; his mouth wide and without any expression but imbecility; his eyes vacant and spiritless; and the corpulence of his person was far better fitted to communicate the idea of a turtle-eating alderman than a refined philosopher. Wisdom, most certainly, never disguised herself before in so uncouth a garb."

Memoirs of Lord Charlemont, vol. i. p. 8.

[*To face page* 162.

time busily sowing calumnies throughout Europe, Rousseau's popularity had suffered amongst a certain class of English men of letters, more in sympathy with Helvétius, Holbach, and Diderot, than with the author of the *Vicaire Savoyard*. Hume's philosophic sympathies certainly drew him that way; and in 1763, when he was appointed Secretary to the English Ambassador in Paris, Lord Hertford, his most congenial acquaintances were found at the headquarters of the Encyclopædists, in the salon of Madame Geoffrin, or in the circle of the Baron d'Holbach. We know in what terms he would have heard Rousseau spoken of in this society. True, patronized also by the Countess de Boufflers, by the Maréchale de Luxembourg and by the Marquise de Verdelin, *les dévotes de Jean Jacques*, as the Encyclopædists called them, Hume heard him also discussed with enthusiastic sympathy: and most certainly Hume had elected to stand with the sympathizers. But in the character of a good-natured man, whose wish was to be on pleasant terms with every one, and not to quarrel with the opinions of the persons with whom he lived, he found himself in this position, that, pledged by his past professions of veneration for Rousseau to agree in all the praises of him by his *dévotes*, a disposition arose in him, if not precisely to agree with, at any rate to wonder if there were not a good deal of truth in the descriptions of their "old friend Jean Jacques" by the Encyclopædists, as an artificial scoundrel, an impostor and an ingrate, who was absolutely certain to turn round and rend any one foolish enough to attempt to serve him.

Positive proof exists that even before he had met Rousseau, Hume had been prejudiced by the Encyclopædists against him.

In June 1766, after the quarrel had taken place, Madame de Verdelin wrote to Rousseau with the purpose of persuading him that mischief-makers were busy trying to sow division between himself and Hume, and that he should not listen to them any more than

the good David had listened to them, in the days before their meeting in Paris, and after it had been arranged that Rousseau should go with him to England.

"He" (that is, David Hume) "consulted me in the most straightforward way," wrote Madame de Verdelin,[1] "about the evil things they had told him about you. He said with perfect candour, 'I ask you these questions, Madam, because it is not the celebrated author I am anxious to serve; but the honest man who has been persecuted, with whom I would wish to share all I have to make him happy.'"

It stands then as proved, that "evil things" *had* been told Hume about Rousseau. And now for the warnings he had received. Marmontel relates how the considerate Baron d'Holbach prophesied to Hume what would happen to him: and how Hume wrote to inform him the prophecy had come true.

"Here," wrote Marmontel,[2] "are some facts of which I was myself a witness. When upon the recommendation of Milord Marshal and of the Countess de Boufflers, Hume offered Rousseau to find him a retreat in England, and when Rousseau had accepted this offer and they were about to start, the Baron d'Holbach said to Hume, 'Sir, you are warming a viper in your bosom. I warn you—you will feel its bite.' The good David Hume saw more passion than reason in the Baron's warning; and was not dissuaded from his intention of taking Rousseau with him to his country and there of rendering him all manner of friendly services. He believed he had to do with one of the most honest, warmhearted and best of men. In all the letters he wrote to d'Holbach he repeated the same praises, and the Baron, when reading these letters to us, said: 'He does not know him. Wait a little, he will know him before long.' Sure enough, a short time afterwards the Baron received a

[1] Streckeisen-Moultou, Letter 54, 27 April, 1766, vol. ii. page 562.
[2] *Memoirs of Marmontel*, vol. iii. p. 15.

letter which commenced thus :—'You were right, Monsieur le Baron !—Rousseau is a monster.'

"'Ah,' said d'Holbach to us coldly, and without the least surprise, 'at last, he knows him—'"

Although Hume saw, or endeavoured to see, more passion than reason in the evil things told him by the Encyclopædists about their "old friend Jean Jacques," these things, and the suspicions they awakened, were present in his mind when he met Rousseau : and they played a very important part in his conduct to a man he did his best to think well of, and to serve, in accordance with his promise to those charming and highly-placed ladies, the Countess de Boufflers and Madame de Verdelin ; but whom he also promised the Encyclopædists to watch very closely, in order that he might at once inform them, and protect himself, should Jean Jacques prove to be the viper and monster they esteemed him. This cautious and watchful attitude towards his *protégé*, combined with his more good-natured than scrupulous desire to please both Jean Jacques devotees and his enemies, explains Hume's behaviour in Paris and in England by a more credible theory than the supposition that he was Rousseau's deliberate betrayer, or the conscious accomplice of his secret enemies. But, on the other hand, if Hume be judged by his actions, and the motives of these actions by their results, it does not admit of dispute that he did betray Rousseau ; and that professing to be his benefactor, he inflicted upon him irreparable injuries.

To discover whether Hume's behaviour, or the diseased imagination of his *protégé*, explains Rousseau's suspicions of his benefactor, let us, when following the history of events, leave all questions of motive out of the question, and examine what the "good David's" conduct really was.

Rousseau reached Paris on the 16th Dec. 1765. Had his admirers permitted it, he intended to pass through France without exciting any attention. He lodged for

the first two days at the house of Madame Duchesne, the widow of the French publisher of *Emile*. Immediately upon his arrival, he wrote to his friend de Luze,[1] who was to travel with Hume and himself to London.

"I wish much I could go and see you: but *in order not to show off my Armenian cap in the streets*, I am obliged to ask you to come to me."

Here is a small piece of evidence worth recording as we pass, for presently we shall find Grimm affirming that the proscribed man promenaded the streets in his "strange attire," in order to excite attention.

On the 18th December, the Prince de Conti invited Rousseau to occupy an apartment expressly prepared for him in the Temple. The attention was one that could not have been refused without ungraciousness: at the same time, Rousseau recognized quite correctly the effect this would have upon his enemies.

"The Prince de Conti,"[2] he wrote afterwards to Malesherbes, "honoured me in Paris with a welcome which was more in accord with his own generous feelings than with my situation. I lent myself to his wishes as a duty, but with repugnance; because I foresaw that my enemies would make me pay dearly for all this honour."

During the fifteen days he spent in Paris as a guest of a prince of the royal house of France, the proscribed and fugitive author was overwhelmed by a stream of visitors; including not only personal friends and acquaintances, but people of the highest rank and fame in social and intellectual circles, who came expressly to testify to the unspoiled enthusiasm for himself and his writings felt by everything that was most distinguished in France—*outside* of the clique of the Encyclopædists.

Within that clique, one can understand the impression made by this demonstration. As for the impression made upon Hume, who was an eye-witness of what went

[1] See *Corres.*, 16 Dec. 1765.
[2] See *Corres.*, May 1766.

on at the Temple, we have it recorded in a letter written three months afterwards to his brother :[1]—

"Of all the writers that are, or ever were, in Europe," wrote Hume, in March 1766, "Rousseau is the man who has acquired the most enthusiastic and passionate admirers. I have seen many extraordinary scenes of this nature in Paris."

The object of this passionate enthusiasm and admiration, ill, weary, hungering for peace and repose, although he was no doubt grateful for the affection shown him, suffered terribly under the strain it imposed upon him. On the 2nd January, the day before his departure, he wrote to his friend Dupeyrou :[2]—

"I am here in my hôtel Saint-Simon, like Sancho in his island of Barataria, in representation all day long. I have visitors of all estates, from the moment I get up to the time I go to bed ; I am forced even to dress in public ! I have never suffered so much in my life ! and happily it is over now."

His departure was advanced by a few days, not, as Grimm affirms, because the police insisted upon it,[3] but because Rousseau desired it—fearing that, as in Strasburg, his health might give way. On the 26th December he wrote to his travelling companion, de Luze :[4]—

"I cannot, sir, endure much longer this life on a public stage. Could you not in charity hasten a little our departure? Mr. Hume consents to start on Thursday at twelve, to sleep at Senlis. If you could fall in with this arrangement, you would do me the greatest service."

Rousseau started upon his journey to London, with de Luze and David Hume as his companions, on the 4th January, 1766. At this date no shadow of any suspicion had crossed his mind about the man whose serviceable offers he had preferred to those made him

[1] See *Letters of David Hume to W. Strahan*, etc., edited by G. Birkbeck Hill.

[2] See *Corres.*, 2 Jan. 1766.

[3] See page 214.

[4] *Corres.*, 26 Dec. 1765.

by the King of Prussia and the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, and by a crowd of other would-be protectors.

Did the "good David's" conduct during these three first weeks of his personal acquaintance with Rousseau justify the entire confidence placed in him? Here is a question that undeniable facts must answer.

It was during this epoch that the libel described as the "false Letter of the King of Prussia" went the round of Paris. The nominal author of this false Letter was Horace Walpole, who knew nothing of Rousseau personally, who had never seen him; and whose opinions about him, or rather whose prejudices against him (manifested in the obviously base and cowardly action of mocking a man in misfortune) can only have been obtained from the Encyclopædists. Walpole, who lodged in Paris in the same hotel as Hume, had only resided there three months. He also frequented the salon of Madame Geoffrin and the society of the Baron d'Holbach, and it seems probable that he, as well as David, had altered his original opinion of Rousseau, in this circle of his enemies. In Madame de Verdelin's letter of the 10th October, we have heard her speak to Rousseau of a "Milord Walpole" as a personage consulted by Hume in his efforts to discover a suitable retreat for the exile from France and Switzerland, in England. We have found too, that Walpole responded to these inquiries with suggestions for the exile's comfort; and that he offered neighbourly services, and to provide Jean Jacques with society, or to protect his seclusion, in accordance with his own wishes. Now, inasmuch as when, later on, Rousseau arrived in Paris, Walpole declined Hume's offer to introduce him to the celebrity of the hour, because (so he affirmed) he "did not find it honest to go and pay a man a cordial visit having in his pocket a letter where he turned him into ridicule," we may assume that two months earlier Walpole would not have esteemed it honest either, to offer neighbourly help and introductions to friends to a man he regarded

as a charlatan and an impostor? We have now to judge from the Letter itself what the composer of it must have then believed true of the man whom he turned into ridicule. Here is the *Letter of the King of Prussia to M. Rousseau* as it was circulated by Grimm on the 1st January, 1766.

"You have renounced Geneva, your country; you have been hunted out of Switzerland, the land so highly praised in your writings; France has sentenced you to arrest: come then to me. I admire your talents, and I am amused by your reveries, although, let me tell you by the way, they occupy too much of your time and attention. At length make up your mind to be wise and happy. You have made yourself talked about long enough by eccentricities hardly worthy of a really great man. Show your enemies now that you can sometimes have common-sense; that will make them angry; and do you no harm. My estates offer you a peaceful retreat. I wish to do you good, and if you choose to accept it, I will; but if you reject my bounty, rest well assured I shall tell no one. If you persist in racking your brains to discover new misfortunes, choose those you like. I am a king, and can procure you any to suit your wishes; and what certainly will not happen to you if you have your enemies to deal with, I will leave off persecuting you when you leave off taking pride in being persecuted.—Your good friend Frederic."

This "pleasantry" (by Grimm's account destined to "amuse the public at the expense of an author who was not amusing—*à égayer un peu le public aux dépens d'un auteur qui n'est pas gai*") had no quality of gaiety about it; but it had the double value for Rousseau's calumniators that, taken as a jest, it mocked him as an impostor who preferred even persecutions to remaining out of sight of the public; and taken literally, it robbed him of the honour done him by Frederic's offer of a retreat near Potsdam, and indeed transformed this honour into an insult.

In proof of the fact that the letter *was* taken literally, and in France as well as in England, we find a notice in Bachaumont's *Mémoires Secrets* for the 28th Dec. 1765.

"There is in circulation," writes the editor, "a very strange letter from the King of Prussia to the celebrated Jean Jacques Rousseau. *If it be authentic, the letter explains the motives which determined the philosopher's change of plan about his place of retreat.*"

We shall presently find that the London *St. James' Chronicle* also published the letter both in French and in English, as a genuine document.

In short, this pleasantry, so called, was an especially malicious and mischievous libel; and its nominal author, or authors, became the responsible, though hardly, perhaps, the entirely conscious, agents of the secret conspirators, who worked to dishonour a man already broken in health and happiness by three years of incessant persecutions.

But had David Hume, Rousseau's professing protector, any share in the production of this libel? Before examining the facts, it seems worth while to quote an admission of Mr. Morley's, following after the statement "that it would be ridiculous for us to waste time in discussing Jean Jacques' charges against Hume; that they are not open to serious examination."[1]

"The only part of the indictment," continues Mr. Morley, "about which there could be the least doubt, was the possibility of Hume having been an accomplice in Walpole's very small pleasantry. Some of his friends in Paris suspected that he had had a hand in the supposed letter from the King of Prussia. Although the letter constituted no very malignant jest (?) and could not by a sensible man have been regarded as furnishing just complaint against one who, like Walpole, was merely an impudent stranger, yet if it could be shown that Hume had taken an active part either in the composition or the circulation of a spiteful bit of satire upon one

[1] *Rousseau*, vol. ii. chap. vi., pp. 291, 292.

towards whom he was pretending a singular affection, then we should admit that he showed such a want of sense of the delicacy of friendship as amounted to something like treachery. But," adds this critic, who esteems it ridiculous to waste any time in serious examination of the charges he dismisses, "*a letter from Walpole to Hume sets this doubt at rest.*"

Walpole's letter will be given presently. But first of all it must be recognized that the doubt as to whether Hume had taken any part when in Paris in the composition of this "spiteful bit of satire," *is* set at rest by his own admission that he had permitted himself a pleasantry in connection with it The sham letter to the King of Prussia, circulated by Grimm on the 1st January, was by David Hume's own account in every one's hands when he and Rousseau reached England. On the 16th February Hume, who must have been questioned about his share in it by the Countess de Boufflers, sends her this message, in his letter to the Marquise de Brabantane.

"Tell Madame de Boufflers that the only pleasantry I permitted myself in connection with the pretended letter of the King of Prussia was made by me at the dinner table of Lord Ossery."

What the "pleasantry" contributed to the letter by a man who pretended a singular affection for Rousseau actually was is made clear in a letter from Madame de Boufflers to Hume, after the quarrel. Quite evidently the patroness of both philosophers is using her best endeavours to soothe David's temper, and is studiously careful to avoid all reproaches. "Rousseau's letter," she writes, "is atrocious: it is to the last extent extravagant and inexcusable; and the impossibility of ever atoning for it will torment him all his life. But do not believe him capable of any falsehood or artifice; nor imagine that he is either an impostor or a scoundrel. His anger has no just cause, but it is sincere; of that I feel no doubt. Here is what I imagine to be the cause of it. I have heard it said, and he has perhaps been told, that

one of the best phrases in Mr. Walpole's letter was by you, and that you had said in jest, and speaking in the name of the King of Prussia, 'If you wish for persecutions, I am a king and can procure them for you of any sort you like,' and that M. Walpole had employed this phrase; and so as not to lay claim to a *bon-mot* that was not his, had said you were its author. If this be true, and Rousseau knows it, do you wonder that, sensitive, hotheaded, melancholy and proud, as they say he is, he has become enraged?

"No doubt he has forgotten all decency, and has believed what he ought never to have thought, that a man known and esteemed as you are, whose integrity has proved itself by long years of practice could either have deceived the world, or suddenly have been transformed. Never mind what proofs were given him against you, he should have rejected them; he should have doubted his own eyes and felt ashamed of his weakness in trusting them if they led him to suspect you. For that matter, if his complaints against you are only founded on the phrase attributed to you, it might be said that his vanity has been too easily hurt, since this sentence is a satire against ambitious power rather than against him. To fly into a rage about a simple mockery, to forget one's self entirely and what is owing to others also, is to show an excess of pride positively criminal. If indeed he thought you took part in the whole letter, there would be more excuse for him, but still, not excuse enough. But admitting it all, why have not you, instead of allowing yourself to give way to your irritation against an unhappy man, who can do you no harm, and who has ruined *himself* completely, show instead the generous pity which characterizes you? You would then have avoided a public scandal, which divides opinions, flatters the malignity of the enemies you have in common, amuses them at the expense of both of you, and revives the old clamour against philosophers and philosophy."

Hume, when answering this letter, does not deny that

the "pleasantry" he contributed to the letter of the King of Prussia was the phrase cited by Madame de Boufflers. But he says that Rousseau "knew nothing about it if such a thing ever took place:"—"jamais on ne l'instruisait de la plaisanterie dont vous me parlez: quand même elle aurait eu lieu."

We may say then, that it stands as an established fact that even before they left Paris together, Hume, unsuspected by Rousseau, had been guilty towards him of the act which Mr. Morley admits showed "a want of sense of the delicacy of friendship which amounted to something like treachery."

Here now is Walpole's letter which his English critic accepted as conclusive proof of Hume's innocence of this act.

MR. WALPOLE TO MR. HUME.

"*Orlington Street*, 26*th July*, 1766.

"I cannot recollect the precise time when I wrote the letter from the King of Prussia; but I can assure you with certainty of truth that it was several days before your departure from Paris, and before the arrival of Rousseau in London; and I can give you a sure proof of this; for not only out of regard for you did I hide the letter whilst you remained in Paris, but it was for this reason that, out of delicacy towards myself, I would not go and see him, although you had often proposed I should. I felt it was not honest to make a cordial visit to a man whilst having in one's pocket a letter where one turned him into ridicule. You are fully at liberty, my dear sir, to use my present letter for your own justification towards M. Rousseau, or any one else. I should be very sorry to be the cause of any reproaches made against you. I have a profound contempt for Rousseau: and it is a matter of complete indifference to me what people think of this concern. But if there be any fault anywhere, which I am far from admitting, I

am willing to bear all the blame. No amount of talent any man may possess will prevent my laughing at him if he be a charlatan; but if he have also an ungrateful and a wicked heart such as Rousseau has shown in his conduct towards you, he will be detested by myself as by all honest people."

It will be noticed that Walpole does not say here that Hume took no part in the letter; but only that if any one is to blame he (Walpole) is willing to accept the whole share. He does not say either that David knew nothing about the letter before he left Paris; but only that he (Horace), out of delicacy for David, hid the letter, in other words, held it back from publication, until he had started. The same observation must be made in connection with Hume's assertion in the *Exposé succinct* that he never "saw" the letter to the King of Prussia until he reached London. He had not seen, but he had heard, the letter that, by Grimm's account, went the round of Paris. In this way did both these honest men avoid explicit falsehoods by methods of equivocation! As for the question of the sense of the delicacy of friendship, Hume, notwithstanding his professions of admiration for Rousseau's genius and virtue, never had and never could have had, any sentiment resembling friendship for a man whose whole nature was not simply unsympathetic, but antipathetic, to his own. Whilst so little was the good David troubled with delicacy that he remained unconscious of the covert sneer at himself in the malicious Walpole's remark, that on his own account *he* declined to be introduced to Rousseau, because he did not feel it honest to enter into cordial relations with a man, whilst behind his back turning him into ridicule.

The position taken up by Hume, and apparently recognized by the Countess de Boufflers, and by his other defenders, as an invulnerable one, was that the substantial services he had rendered Rousseau covered him from reproach, if even he had permitted himself some "simple

mockery," some impertinent curiosity, and some scandalous gossip at the expense of his *protégé*. Very possibly by force of self-persuasion and the flattery of the Encyclopædists, and even of Rousseau's *dévotes*, Hume may have laboured under the delusion that this was his true position: in other words, that his honestly kind intentions were equivalent to performances; and that because he had on several occasions offered to serve Rousseau, and had made some attempts in the way of inquiries about his establishment in England (which had proved unsuccessful), he actually was Jean Jacques' benefactor. It may be said in passing, that had this position assumed by Hume been really his true one, it would not have been esteemed invulnerable by Rousseau, nor even defensible; but the benefactor who claimed a free right to dishonour the man to whom he had rendered essential services, would have appeared in Rousseau's eyes a more mean and dastardly foe than an open enemy.

The position, however, was a false one: inasmuch as Hume was not Rousseau's benefactor. From the commencement to the close of their relationships, Hume conferred no single benefit on Rousseau. He had not facilitated his passage through France: it was the Duc d'Aumont who, at Madame de Verdelin's instances, had obtained his passport.[1] Rousseau had defrayed his own expenses, and on this point he had held good, not against Hume's offers, but against those of Madame de Boufflers and Madame de Verdelin. It was not Hume who had procured him his "pleasant retreat at Wootton:" but Mr. Davenport, an admirer of Rousseau's writings, had offered him this house; and had only made Hume's acquaintance in connection with this proposal.[2] Hume had not gained Rousseau any friends in England, where, by David's own report in 1762, his reputation was firmly established:[3] but a great many enemies were made him

[1] See page 159. [2] See page 157.
[3] See page 190.

by the publication in a newspaper whose editor was Hume's friend, Strahan, of scandalous histories about him, which Hume knew to be false; and which by ordinary laws of hospitality, and of loyalty towards a foreign guest of whom he passed as the protector, he ought to have contradicted.

Hume had not even done the exile any benefit by his solicitations for him of a pension from the King of England;—but he had placed him in the embarrassing position which compelled him either to refuse the pension and offend the king and his ministers: or to accept it and subject himself to the humiliation of an obligation to a man who had treated him with mockery and contempt.

In short, Hume's position towards Rousseau (if we found our view of it upon the facts of his conduct, and upon their results) was *exactly what Rousseau saw it to be.* He *was* the accomplice in deed, if not in intention, of the persecuted man's secret enemies in Paris and in Geneva, who, having hunted him out of France and Switzerland, now pursued him to England: and endeavoured, by the same method of secret calumny, to rob him of sympathizers, and to stir up enemies for him in this country, by building up for him the reputation of an abominable character, an ingrate, a sophist, and an impostor.

All that Hume's defenders, in view of the facts of the case, may do to extricate him from this position is to maintain that he was a tool, rather than a deliberate accomplice, of the conspirators. At the same time, it is impossible to maintain that, in this case, the tool can be regarded as entirely innocent of all the mischief it did. Thus, Hume may not have realized all the malignity of the libels worked into the false letter of the King of Prussia by Walpole and himself: but he cannot have thought it calculated to foster sympathy for the fugitive who had sought shelter in England, to spread in the press the report that this

charlatan enjoyed being persecuted, because it made him notorious; nor can he have supposed that it was conducive to Rousseau's honour to circulate the falsehood that the protection offered him by the most powerful sovereign in Europe, near his own person, was really only a proof of the monarch's contempt for an impostor.

In connection with the other libels against Rousseau, they certainly would not have been published by Hume's friend Strahan,[1] if Hume had expressed his displeasure at the first libel or publicly protested against such treatment of a famous man who had sought a refuge in England. It is possible that Hume's silence meant only that, having permitted himself a "pleasantry" at his *protégé's* expense in Paris, he did not feel free to refuse his French friends a chance of showing off their wit in the English papers. At the same time, he must have clearly recognized that it was not from sheer love of fun that the author of the *New Héloïse* was reproached with coldness of heart and treachery; and that the author of the *Discourse upon Inequality* was described as shutting his door in the face of humble visitors, and treating even his relatives badly whilst he effusively received great people.[2]

Again, Hume may have conceived himself justified after the warning he had received from Holbach that Jean Jacques was a viper and that he would feel his bite, in taking extraordinary precautions to keep himself informed of this dangerous character's proceedings; and this may have induced him to use the dishonourable plan of opening, and resealing, Rousseau's letters before he despatched them. But he cannot possibly have blinded himself to the malicious treachery of using the information he derived from these private letters for detective purposes; and to injure Rousseau in the esteem of his friends.

[1] Editor of *St. James' Chronicle.*

[2] See Note, Appendix, Hume and Rousseau.

This last charge, of tampering with his private letters (Rousseau remained ignorant of Hume's use of the information he derived from them), is certainly one that critics who take it for granted that an accusation implying dishonourable behaviour on Hume's part does not deserve examination, will dismiss off hand, as explained by Rousseau's tendency to base suspicions. Unfortunately, in this case also, Hume himself supplies the evidence which convicts him.

First of all, in connection with Rousseau's assertions that all the letters brought, or forwarded by Hume, had evidently been tampered with, that many letters he ought to have received did not reach him, and that the friends to whom he wrote informed him that his letters to them had been opened and resealed, here is the good David's explanation of this singular state of affairs.[1]

"The story of Rousseau's letters is as follows. He had often been complaining to me, and with reason, that he was ruined by postage at Neuchatel; that it commonly cost him twenty-five or twenty-six louis a year, and all for letters of no importance, being written, some of them, by people who took that way of abusing him; and most of them by people unknown to him. He was therefore resolved, he said, in London to receive no letters which came by post. When he went to Chiswick, the postman brought his letters to me. I carried him out a cargo of them. He exclaimed: desired me to return the letters and recover the price of the postage. I told him in that case the clerks of the post-office were entire masters of his letters. He said he was indifferent: they might do with them what they pleased. I added he would be thus cut off from all correspondence with his friends. He said he would give a particular direction to such persons as he desired to correspond with. But till his instructions could arrive, what could I do more friendly, than save, at my own expense, his letters from

[1] See *Letters of David Hume*, edited by Birkbeck Hill.

the curiosity and indiscretion of the clerks of the post-office?"

It appears very clear that what Hume could have done, *and the only thing that he ought to have permitted himself to do*, was to let Rousseau arrange this personal matter as he himself wished. In any case, the "curiosity and indiscretion" of the post-office clerks could hardly have exceeded the curiosity and indiscretion of Hume himself. Rousseau's uneasiness about his correspondence applied not only to the letters he received; but to those he sent away. And we have a very convincing proof that this anxiety was also well founded. In David's correspondence with the Countess de Boufflers he makes the assertion that he has "accidentally" discovered that Rousseau had pecuniary resources which he concealed in order to make himself interesting by an affectation of poverty. He asks Madame de Boufflers to inquire into this matter:—and here again, when charging the lady with this office of spying upon her *protégé*, displays the singular want of the sense of delicacy in friendship which characterizes him.

Hume makes the same assertion in a letter written on the 22nd May, 1766, to a French friend whose name does not appear in his correspondence.

"Madame de Boufflers has no doubt told you," writes Hume, "about the kindness of the King of England towards Rousseau. The secrecy to be observed is extremely agreeable to our friend. He has the weakness of wishing to make himself interesting by complaining of his poverty and his bad health. But I have discovered *by accident* that he has some pecuniary resources, small enough, it is true, but which he concealed from us when giving us an account of his goods. As for his health, it is more robust than infirm, unless the fits of melancholy and spleen he is subject to, be called illness."

In the *Expose succinct*, Hume again repeats that he

"has discovered with certainty that this affectation of extreme poverty is a small piece of trickery, which M. Rousseau employs to render himself interesting, and to excite public commiseration."[1]

Before examining what was the "accident" that helped David to the discovery of Rousseau's hidden pecuniary resources, it should be remarked that Rousseau made no affectation of extreme poverty; but that, on the contrary, his reply to the anxious solicitations of the Countess de Boufflers, the Marquise de Verdelin, and even to Lord-Marshal Keith, when these friends wished to secure him against material privations, was invariably that his means were sufficient for his requirements.[2] As for David Hume, there was no sort of reason why Rousseau should have rendered him an exact account of his means; inasmuch as he certainly did not ask David to increase them. The notion of obtaining a pension from the King of England was entirely Hume's idea; Rousseau's consent to the project was claimed as a concession, because it was known that he had already declined a pension from the King of France and from Frederic. The assertion that Rousseau "had the weakness of wishing to make himself interesting by complaining of his poverty," was a spiteful falsehood. But by what "accident" did Hume, in England, discover that Rousseau had "resources"?

If we turn to the correspondence, we find that amongst the letters that must have passed through Hume's hands at the time when Rousseau, at Chiswick, depended upon him for all arrangements about his correspondence, is one dated February 22nd, and written to d'Ivernois of Geneva. In this letter Rousseau consults his friend about the investment of a small sum of money left with Madame Boy de la Tour; and which he wished to have

[1] See page 190, where in his letter to Hume, Rousseau far from affecting extreme poverty complains of being treated as though he were in need of charity.

[2] See Note, Appendix.

invested in such a way as to secure a small pension for Thérèse after his death, to be added to the pension already settled upon her by Lord-Marshal Keith.

Here is the sentence which gives us the clue to the "accident" which helped David to his "discovery" of Rousseau's supposed trickery.

"I should wish to consult you upon another subject," Rousseau wrote to d'Ivernois. "I have deposited with Madame Boy de la Tour three thousand francs, and Mademoiselle Levasseur, four hundred. The increased expense that living in England will entail, makes me wish to settle this sum as rent on Mlle. Levasseur. The small income from this would double itself; and thus would not be lost for this poor girl at my death. I hear there is to be a loan issued in France; could I place the money in this way without risk? Should I be in time? And would you undertake this for me? To whom should I give the note for the withdrawal of this money? and could it be correctly done without previously giving Madame Boy de la Tour notice?"

There is nothing in the least mysterious in these inquiries, nor in Rousseau's possession of this small reserve sum. Supporting himself and Thérèse by his earnings as a copyist when he was in France, he had commenced then to put by the money he had obtained for his writings. D'Ivernois and Dupeyrou at Geneva, both of them rich men and with the business experience Rousseau lacked, had undertaken to receive and to transmit to him the pension he received from his bookseller Rey, and the one which Lord-Marshal Keith had settled on Thérèse. But Hume, accustomed to hear Jean Jacques talked of by Grimm and Diderot as a man who refused the pension of a king, but who was supported by the bounty of other men of letters whom he sneered at for accepting what enabled them to save him from starvation, was amazed by all this talk about money and investments; and ran away with the notion that here was a fresh instance of deceit!

The Countess de Boufflers received the news of David's wonderful discovery with an indifference that evidently irritated him. Nor were French readers of the *Exposé succinct* impressed by it. But the charge has this importance: that Rousseau's letter to d'Ivernois, *which Hume must have read before despatching it*, gives us the only possible explanation of Hume's sudden acquisition of the knowledge that Jean Jacques had "concealed" pecuniary resources.

Here then, as in the case of this false letter of the King of Prussia, Hume stands convicted by evidence afforded by himself of having dealt treacherously with Rousseau.

In other words, it is only possible for critics who decide that "it would be ridiculous in them to waste time in discussing these charges," or *in examining the evidence which supports them*, to maintain that Rousseau's suspicions of Hume were based on imaginary grievances, or on the delusions of a morbid monomaniac. Nor, again, is it possible for an attentive observer of the course of events, and of Rousseau's position, to hold the view that he showed either excessive indignation, or violent passion in any action connected with his rupture with Hume. On the contrary, it seems difficult to say how, without loss of self-respect, he could have acted with more moderation and justice than he displayed in these difficult circumstances.

CHAPTER IV

ROUSSEAU'S 'ATROCIOUS' LETTER TO DAVID HUME, 10TH JUNE, 1766

ROUSSEAU reached Wootton on the 22nd March, 1766. On the first of April, the *St. James' Chronicle*, Strahan's paper, published the false letter from the King of Prussia as a genuine document. On the 24th April, Rousseau wrote to the editor protesting against this imposture in the following terms—

"*Wootton, 24th April*, 1766.

"You have offended, sir, against the respect which every private person owes a sovereign, by publicly attributing to the King of Prussia a letter full of extravagance and spite, which consequently you should have known could not have had this author. You have even ventured to transcribe his signature, as though you had seen it written by his hand. I inform you, sir, that this letter was fabricated in Paris; and what grieves and tears my heart especially, is that the impostor who wrote it has accomplices in England. You owe it to the King of Prussia, to the truth, and also to me, to print this letter, signed by me, in reparation of an error which no doubt you would reproach yourself for having committed, did you realize of what a wicked design you have been made the instrument. I offer you my sincere salutations.

"JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU."

There is not a word in this letter that can be blamed, nor ought Rousseau to have refrained from exposing the true character of this libellous production. It was not put forward in the *St. James' Chronicle* as a "pleasantry," and infallibly it would have been accepted by English

readers as a genuine epistle, exhibiting the poor esteem of the King of Prussia for the author of *Emile*, had not Rousseau's protest established its fraudulent character.

After his letter to the *St. James' Chronicle*, Rousseau wrote to the Countess de Boufflers, to Madame de Verdelin,[1] to Lord-Marshal Keith, and to Malesherbes[2] (in other words, to the friends who by their advice had shown their belief in Hume's good-will towards him), explaining his reasons for believing that whilst professing to be his benefactor, Hume was his secret defamer. He did not publicly accuse Hume of treachery; and although determined to forego the pension offered him by the King of England rather than accept with it any debt of gratitude to Hume, who had solicited this pension for him, he refrained from giving his true reasons when writing, on the 12th May, 1766, to General Conway, asking for the postponement of the offer. General Conway was so far from suspecting Rousseau's motives, that he sent this letter to Hume; who, also professing to misunderstand what must have been perfectly clear to him, sent the letter (16th May) to the Countess de Boufflers,[3] pretending to believe that Rousseau's extravagance in declining the pension he had before shown himself willing to accept, was due to the condition made by the King that it should remain a secret. Keeping up this pretence, Hume wrote to Rousseau on the 19th June, telling him that he had persuaded General Conway to get the condition of secrecy removed; and that all that was now needed was for Rousseau to give him the assurance that he would not publicly affront the king by declining the pension, if it were offered him. In replying to this letter on the 23rd June,[4] Rousseau wrote: "*I believed, sir, that my silence, interpreted by your conscience, would have been clear enough; but as it enters into your plans not to understand, I must speak clearly.*" He went on to

[1] See *Correspondance*, 9th April, 1766. [2] 10th May.
[3] [4] See *Private Correspondence of David Hume*, p. 168, p. 203.

say that, having discovered Hume's efforts to dishonour him, he could not accept any benefit obtained through his mediation. On the 26th June, Hume wrote demanding an explanation. On the 10th July, in a very long and, in some places, extraordinarily eloquent letter, Rousseau poured forth the whole story of his griefs against Hume.

The description of this letter as "atrocious" by the Countess de Boufflers, who probably, scared by its length, did not read it, has established a precedent, followed by both apologists and accusers of Rousseau; and in a general way, it is taken for granted that this letter may safely remain unread. The very opposite is true. No attentive student of Rousseau's character and history should neglect this wonderful page in his soul's history which records the spiritual processes that transformed the Prophet Rousseau into the broken-hearted man who wrote the *Confessions*, the *Dialogues* and the *Reveries*. As for the alleged "ferocity" and "atrocity" of this letter, the reader will notice that except for the term "mountebank" (*jongleur*) applied to Tronchin (who, for his part, described Rousseau as a "scoundrel" and a "demon"), no epithet of abuse is ever employed; and no "violence" or "rage" ever exhibited. The charges brought against Hume are not only in every instance true charges: but in almost every instance they under-state, instead of exaggerating, the actual facts. Rousseau errs only, as has been said, in mistaking Hume for the director, where he was the half-conscious instrument, of the plot to dishonour a man who had been rendered dearer to the public and more famous by other methods of persecution. Now, this was changed. The writer of this letter saw, as in a vision, yet quite correctly, what had been effected: and the position where he stood. He foresaw, and the events that followed justified his forebodings, that whereas up to now the sympathy of the public had been with him, in the case between himself and his professing benefactor, David Hume, the popular judgment would go against him. He recognized too (and here we study the tragic

influence, on a nature of extraordinary sensibility and affectionateness, of the consciousness of a pursuing and persistent hatred, distorting his motives and actions in the eyes of his fellow-men), that he could not prove to others what he knew to be true; and that the facts his own experience compelled him to recognize, would not appear natural, or credible, when he related them. All this mingled dismay and firmness reveals itself in this long, wonderful, pathetic letter. At the close, the flame of the old eloquence kindles again; and, for a few moments—and for the last time—shows, as in a flash of light, the Prophet in this broken-hearted man—whose inspiration was quenched when he lost faith in his power to reach the hearts of his contemporaries.

ROUSSEAU'S LETTER TO DAVID HUME.

"*Wootton*, 10*th July*, 1766.

"I am ill, sir, and little disposed for writing; but as you ask for an explanation, it must be given you. It only depended upon yourself to have had this explanation long since: but you did not ask for it, and I kept silent. You ask for it to-day; and I send it you. It must be a long one: I am sorry for it: but much has to be said, and I do not wish to begin the discussion over again.

"I live outside the world, and I remain ignorant of much that goes on in it. I belong to no party, I am mixed up in no intrigues; nothing is told me, and I only know what I feel. But, inasmuch as good care is taken to make me feel very forcibly, I know what I feel with great certitude. As a matter of course, the first precaution taken by people who carry on a secret plot is to hide their proceedings so well that no open proofs of them can be detected; if these are wanted, no case against them can be established. But there are other proofs that bring inward conviction to an honest man. You shall know what are the proofs that serve as the foundation of my judgment.

"You ask me, confidently, who is your accuser? Your accuser, sir, is the one man in the whole world who, testifying against you, I would believe; it is yourself. I will, without reserve or fear, use all the openness natural to me; and as a hater of all deceits, speak of you to yourself, as I would speak of you to another man in whom I had still the confidence I no longer have in you. I will trace all the movements of my soul, and disclose the reasons that direct them; and naming David Hume as a third person, I will make you the judge of what I ought to think of him.

"I left Switzerland, worn out by the barbarous treatment I had received there; but this ill-treatment, it should be remarked, put only my person in peril; and left my honour untouched. Following the impulses of my heart, I started with the intention of joining Lord-Marshal. But at Strasburg, I received a most tender invitation from Mr. Hume to go with him to England; where he promised me the most agreeable welcome; and more tranquillity than I have found here. I hesitated between my old friend and my new one: I was wrong. I chose the last: I acted still more wrongly; but the pleasure of knowing personally a great nation of which I had heard so much good, and so much evil, carried the day. Certain that I could not lose George Keith, I felt proud to gain David Hume; his merit, his rare talents, his well-established uprightness, made me desire to join his friendship to the friendship that his illustrious compatriot honoured me with already: and I took pride in the thought of showing a fine example to men of letters by the sincere union of two writers whose principles were so different.

"Before the invitation given me by the King of Prussia and Lord-Marshal, as I was uncertain of my place of refuge, I had asked for, and had obtained through my friends, a passport from the court of France; which I used in order to go to Paris, and join Mr. Hume there. He saw (perhaps he saw more than he cared to see?) the favour

and the warm welcome I received there, from a great Prince; and I venture to say, also, from the public. I lent myself to this favour with reluctance; for I well understood that it would irritate the jealousy of my enemies. But it was delightful to me to observe the increase of Mr. Hume's popularity in Paris, which was the result of the kind action he was undertaking. He should surely have been as much touched by it as I was? But I do not know if it may not have affected him differently.

"We started on our journey with one of my friends, who went with us to England, almost exclusively on my account. On landing at Dover, transported to set foot in this land of liberty, and to have been brought here by such an illustrious man, I threw myself into his arms and tenderly embraced him; unable to speak from force of emotion, but covering his face with kisses and tears, which spoke better than words. This is not the only occasion when he must have seen how my feelings for him penetrated to my heart. I know not what effect such memories can have on him to-day, but it seems to me they must be importunate, and bring with them self-reproach.

"We were fêted in London. By every one kindness and esteem were shown me. Mr. Hume graciously presented me to every one. It was natural that I should attribute to him the kindness of this welcome. My heart was full of him: I spoke of him, and wrote of him, to all my friends. My attachment to him increased daily: and he, on his side, frequently gave me marks of regard that touched me extremely. Amongst these, however, I do not count the one of having a life-size portrait of me taken. This fantasy appeared to me somewhat extravagant, and there was an air of ostentation about it which did not please me.[1] It would have appeared more natural to me had Mr. Hume been lavish

[1] See Note, Appendix A A, vol. i., for Mr. Morley's conclusions about Rousseau based upon the impression made by the portrait of him taken in England under the auspices of David Hume.

in his ordinary habits; and ready to throw away his money; or if he had kept a portrait gallery of his friends. But I am ready to admit that in my dissatisfaction here, I may have been wrong.

"But what appeared to me the most true, estimable, and generous act of friendship on Mr. Hume's part, and the one most worthy of him, was the trouble he took, of his own accord, in soliciting for me a pension from the king, a favour to which I had certainly no right to aspire. As a witness of his zeal in this matter, I was profoundly touched by it. Nothing could please me better, or flatter me more, than this service, not from mercenary motives, for, perhaps too much pleased with what I have, I do not know how to desire very much what I have not; and having, thanks to my friends, and my work, enough to keep me alive, I have no ambition to possess more. But the honour of receiving proofs of goodwill, I will not say from so great a monarch, but from so good a man as ruler, husband, master, friend, did affect me sensibly. And when I considered further that the minister who obtained this grace for me was integrity in person, and that this integrity was so rare in men of his estate, and so useful to the people, I could only glory in having for my benefactors three of the men whom I should have chosen for my friends out of the whole world. Thus, far from rejecting the pension offered me, I only made one condition before accepting it: namely, the consent of a person whose approval I could not, without failing in my duty, dispense with.

"Honoured by the kindness shown me by every one, I tried to respond in a proper manner. Nevertheless my bad health, and the habit of living in the country, made me find town life inconvenient. From the moment that I mentioned this, a crowd of country houses were offered me; I had a choice of them in every province. Mr. Hume undertook to receive these proposals, and transmitted them to me; he even took me to visit several country houses. I hesitated how to decide, and he

encouraged me to be in no hurry. At length I decided on this country place: and at once Mr. Hume undertook all arrangements, and all difficulties were smoothed away. I took my departure from town, and arrived in this solitary habitation; and found it in every way most agreeable. The master of the house had seen to everything: I had all I needed; I was quiet, independent. Here at length, then, was the much-desired moment, when all my woes would end? But no; they were only to begin over again; and in a more cruel form than I had yet experienced.

"Up to this moment, I have spoken out of the fulness of my heart, and have, with the greatest pleasure, done justice to the services rendered me by Mr. Hume. Why is not what remains to be said of the same character? Nothing has been concealed by me that does him honour. One has no right to weigh the value of services rendered, unless one is accused of ingratitude: but Mr. Hume does accuse me of it, to-day. I will venture then to make an observation which he renders necessary. If the trouble taken by him be estimated by the time and thought he has given, and especially by the good-will he has shown, the value of it is inestimable; but as for the real good done me, these services are more apparent than weighty. I did not come as a beggar to England, asking for my daily bread. I brought that with me. What I needed was a refuge; and in this country that is free to every foreigner. Besides, I was not so absolutely unknown that had I arrived alone I should have gone without help or counsel.[1] If some persons have sought me out for Mr. Hume's sake, others have sought me for my own. If Mr. Davenport has been good enough to give me this habitation, it was not to oblige Mr. Hume, whom he did not know, and whom he only

[1] See page 157.—"As his reputation is firmly established in England I have no doubt that every one would zealously testify in every way to the respect felt for him."—Hume's letter to the Countess de Boufflers.

saw in order to beg him to urge me to accept his obliging offers. Thus, when to-day Mr. Hume seeks to alienate from me this honest man, he tries to take away from me a friend he did not give me. All the good that has befallen me here, would have befallen me in much the same way without him. But the evil that has befallen me would not have happened. For why should I have any enemies in England? And how and why does it happen that these enemies are precisely Mr. Hume's friends? Who is it that has excited their enmity against me? It cannot be myself who have done it, for I never saw these people in my life. I should have had no enemies in this country, had I come here alone.

"Up to now, I have spoken only of facts publicly known; and they are facts which my gratitude has caused to be noised abroad. Those I have now to consider are not only private and personal ones, but they have causes that are kept secret: as the interested person, I know these causes by their effects; and they serve as the foundation of my convictions.

"A short time after our arrival in London, I remarked there a change of opinions towards me, that at first was vaguely felt, but soon became very apparent. Before I came to England, this was one of the countries of Europe where my reputation, I might say my fame, was most securely established. The public papers were full of my praises: and there was only one cry of condemnation against my persecutors. The same tone prevailed after my arrival here: the papers announced it triumphantly. England took just pride in offering a persecuted man a refuge, and congratulated herself upon her laws and government. Suddenly, and without any apparent cause, this tone changed; but so quickly, and so utterly, that amongst the caprices of the public none has ever been more astonishing. The signal was given in a certain magazine, in an article as full of stupidities as lies.[1] The author of the article, to start

[1] Lloyd's *Evening Post*, January 23rd. See Appendix, Note.

with, described me as the son of a musician. From this time onwards I was consistently spoken of in the press either abusively, or equivocally. Everything that had to do with my misfortunes was disguised, altered, presented in a false light, and to my disadvantage as far as possible. Far from alluding to the welcome given me in Paris, and which had made only too much noise, it was assumed that I dared not appear in that town; and one of Mr. Hume's friends was surprised when I told him I had passed through Paris.

"Too much accustomed to the inconstancy of the public to be greatly affected by it, I was not the less astonished by this sudden change; and by the singular unanimity of this concert, where not one of those who had praised me when I was absent, appeared to recollect to defend me when I was present in their country. I found it strange that precisely after the return of Mr. Hume, who has so much credit in London, so much influence over men of letters and publishers, and such intimate relationships with them, that his presence should produce such a contrary effect to the one that might have been expected; and that amongst so many writers, none of his friends should show themselves mine. That my enemies were not his, on the other hand, was very plain. They maintained that I had traversed France under his protection, by favour of a passport his influence at Court had obtained for me: and it was almost given to be understood that I had travelled in his suite and at his cost!

"All this had not much importance, and was only somewhat strange. But what was stranger still was that the tone of his friends towards me changed as absolutely as the tone of the public. Always, and it gives me pleasure to admit it, their zeal and readiness to serve me remained the same; but they were far from showing me the same respect. Thus the personage I have in my mind, and at whose house we had stayed upon my arrival, accompanied his services with speeches so harsh

and sometimes so offensive, that one would really have said he sought to oblige me simply to have the chance of manifesting the contempt he felt for me.

"I do not know what Mr. Hume may have secretly told his acquaintances about me: but nothing was more singular than the way they behaved to me, with his knowledge, and often with his assistance. Although my purse was not empty, and I needed no one else's, and although he knew this perfectly well, one would have thought that I required maintenance at the hands of the public, and that to save me from want I had to be given alms. I may say that this continual and disagreeable affectation of charity towards me was one of the things which made me take a dislike to living in London. It is not certainly on this footing that one should introduce in England a man for whom one desires to gain respect. But this charity may have had a benevolent intention? I will admit that this is possible: and pass on to another matter.

"In Paris, a forged Letter was circulated supposed to have been addressed to me by the King of Prussia, full of the most cruel malignity. I heard with surprise that it was a Mr. Walpole, a friend of Mr. Hume's, who circulated this letter. I asked him if this were true: his only reply was to ask me, from whom I held this information? Only a few minutes before he had given me a card of introduction to this Mr. Walpole, so that he might take over the charge of some important papers of mine in Paris, I wanted brought to England!

"I heard also that the son of the mountebank (*jongleur*) Tronchin, my most mortal enemy, was not only the friend, but the *protégé* of Mr. Hume, and that they lodged together. When Mr. Hume found out that I knew this, he was careful to confide the fact to me, assuring me that the son was very unlike his father. I lodged in this same house for several nights, as did my housekeeper; and by their manner towards us, and the welcome given us by the landladies, who at the

same time are his friends, I could judge of the way in which he, or else the man said not to resemble his father, must have spoken of her, and of myself.

"All these facts together made an impression upon me which rendered me anxious, although I combated it with horror. At the same time, the letters I wrote did not reach their destination; those I received had been opened; and all these had passed through Mr. Hume's hands. If by chance one of them escaped, he could not hide his eagerness to see it. One evening, I saw a manœuvre of his in connection with my letters, which alarmed me. After supper, we were both silent, and seated by the fire, and I found his eyes fastened on me in a way that often happened and which I find it difficult to describe. This time, his dry, ardent, mocking, searching gaze became insufferable to me. To get rid of it, I tried to return his stare, but meeting his eyes, I felt myself shudder, and my own eyes fell. The face and voice of the good David are those of a good-natured man: but in heaven's name where does this good-natured person come by the eyes that he fastens on his friends?[1]

"The impression of this gaze remained with me and agitated me: my trouble grew almost overwhelming; unless a relief came, I felt I should suffocate. But soon violent remorse seized me, and, indignant with myself, I gave way to a transport of affection, of which I still remember the delightful emotion. I flung my arms round his neck and clasped him to my heart, suffocated with sobs and bathed in tears, and exclaimed in a broken voice: 'No, no; David Hume is not a traitor. If he were not the best of men, he would be the most wicked.' David Hume returned my embrace politely: and tapping me on the back, repeated several times, 'There there,

[1] "The powers of physiognomy were baffled by Hume's countenance: his face was broad and fat; his mouth wide and without any other expression than that of imbecility; his eyes vacant and spiritless:—wisdom most certainly never disguised herself before in so uncouth a garb."—See *Memoirs of Lord Charlemont*, vol. i. p. 8.

my dear sir; come now, my dear sir; what is the matter, my dear sir?' '*Quoi! mon cher monsieur! Eh! mon cher monsieur! Quoi donc! mon cher monsieur.*' He said nothing more: and I felt my heart chilled. We went to bed: and the following day, I left for the country.

"Having arrived at this agreeable refuge, where, from so far, I had come to look for peace, I should have found it, in a house that was charming, commodious and solitary: and where the master, a man of taste and merit, spared nothing to make my habitation agreeable to me. But what peace can life bring when one's heart is agitated? Troubled by the most cruel doubts, not knowing what I should think of a man I felt it my duty to love, I did my best to cure myself of these doubts and to regain confidence in my benefactor. The inexplicable thing was that he had avoided all explanation, in a case where his honour, and his friendship for me, rendered one necessary! Before deciding what I ought to think, I resolved to make one more effort; and to write in such a way as to regain him, if he had been won over by my enemies; or in any case, to force him to explain himself. I wrote to him then a letter which he must have found a very natural one if he were guilty, but a very extraordinary one if he were guiltless; for what could be more extraordinary than a letter full of gratitude for his services, and at the same time of doubts about his sentiments? And where, putting his actions on one side, and his intentions on the other, instead of speaking of his favours as proofs of his friendship, I begged him to love me, on account of the services he had rendered me?

"I did not take the precaution of keeping a copy of this letter: but since Mr. Hume has kept it, let him show it. Whoever reads this letter, seeing in it a man tormented by secret anxiety which he wishes should be understood but shrinks from openly declaring, will certainly feel curious to know what explanation this

letter, following upon the scene described, provoked? *None at all!* Mr. Hume merely replied to the part of my letter connected with Mr. Davenport's kind intentions towards me: not one word had he to say about the principal subject of my letter, nor about the doubts which he must have seen tormented my heart! I was struck by this silence even more than by his phlegmatic behaviour upon the occasion of our last interview. I was wrong: this silence was natural, after what had gone before it; and I should have expected it; for when one has said to a man's face, 'I am tempted to believe you a traitor,' and he has not the curiosity to ask 'on what grounds?' one may count upon it that he will have no curiosity about the reasons of one's doubts of him through life; and if the reasons be good, the man is judged.

"After I had received his letter, which was slow in coming, I made up my mind about him, and determined not to write again. Everything confirmed me in the resolution to break off all intercourse with him. Very inquisitive about my private affairs, I found he had not remained satisfied with questioning me about them; but that having discovered that my housekeeper was well informed, he had not let slip any opportunity of a *tête-à-tête* with her, without closely catechizing her about my occupations, my resources, my friends, my acquaintances, their names, positions, dwellings, etc., and on all this, with jesuitical cunning, he questioned both of us separately. It is right to feel interest in all that concerns a friend; but one should be contented to know about him only what he cares to tell one; and all this gossip about personal affairs shows a curiosity very out of place in a philosopher.

"At the same time, I received once more two letters that had plainly been tampered with; one from Mr. Boswell, the seal of which was in such a bad state that Mr. Davenport, when he received it, pointed it out to Mr. Hume's lackey; and the other from M. d'Ivernois [1] in

[1] The answer to the letter already alluded to, see p. 180.

a packet forwarded by Mr. Hume ; this letter had been resealed with a hot iron, so unskilfully used, that the paper had been burnt round the seal. I wrote to Mr. Davenport to beg him to keep all my letters and to give them to no other person, on any pretext whatever. I don't know whether Mr. Davenport, who was, of course, far from supposing that this precaution could concern Mr. Hume, showed him my letter. But whether or no, everything told him that I had lost confidence in him ; yet he went on in the same way as before, and did nothing to re-assure me.

" But what became of me when I saw in the public press the pretended Letter from the King of Prussia, which I had not seen before ; this forged Letter, printed in French and in English, given for true, and even with the signature of the king affixed to it; and when I recognized the pen of M. d'Alembert as certainly as if I had seen him write it ![1]

" In this moment, a ray of light revealed to me the secret cause of the astonishingly sudden change towards me of the disposition of the English public ; and I saw in Paris the centre of the plot which was being executed in London.

" M. d'Alembert, another very intimate friend of M. Hume's, had been for a long time my hidden enemy, and on the watch for opportunities of injuring me without compromising himself. I knew his inclinations, without, however, feeling much distressed about them ; and I remained satisfied with warning my friends when the occasion arose. I recollect that one day when Mr. Hume questioned me, and afterwards questioned my housekeeper, that I told him d'Alembert was adroit and

[1] Madame du Deffant also attributed a share in the Letter to d'Alembert. The French is too correct for Walpole or Hume to have produced it unaided ; Musset Pathay compares the letter of Walpole also written in French, with the ' Letter from the King of Prussia,' and points out how one is evidently by an Englishman who is writing in French ; the other by a Frenchman who knows his own language thoroughly.

cunning. He contradicted me with so much warmth that I was astonished. I did not then understand that he was defending his own cause.

"The perusal of this letter alarmed me very much. What was to be thought of a writing where my misfortunes were made a crime, which tended to rob me of the commiseration of every one in my persecutions; and which was given under the name of a Prince who had protected me, in order to render the cruel effect stronger? What might I expect as the result of this opening act? The English people read their public newspapers, and they are not particularly well disposed towards foreigners; a costume that is not their own, suffices to put them in a bad temper. What was a poor alien to expect in his country walks, the only pleasure in life he still cares for? Once let these good people become convinced that this man enjoys being stoned, and they will be very tempted to indulge him. But my grief, my cruel and profound grief, the most bitter I have ever felt, did not come from the peril to which I was exposed. I had too often braved such perils to be moved by them. The treachery of a false friend, in whose hands I was an easy prey, plunged my heart in misery and the sadness of death.

"When this pretended letter was published in London, Mr. Hume, who certainly knew it was fictitious, because I had told him so, said not one word; wrote me nothing; and never seems to have entertained a thought of making, in favour of his absent friend, any declaration of the truth. To arrive at his end he had only to keep quiet; and this is what he did. Mr. Hume having brought me to England, stood out in the public view as in some sense my protector and patron. It would have been a natural step for him to undertake my defence. It was not less natural that, if I had any public protest to make, I should have addressed myself to him to help me. Having left off writing to him, I was in no mood to begin again. I addressed myself to some one else—

first slap in the face for my patron: but he does not feel it.[1]

"When saying that the letter was fabricated in Paris, it mattered very little to me whether it was attributed to M. d'Alembert, or to his screen M. Walpole; but when I added, that what tore my heart was that the impostor had his accomplices in England, I explained myself very clearly to their friend in London, who professed to be my friend also. There was certainly no one else but he in England whose hatred could have torn my heart: second slap in the face for my patron; he does not feel it.

"On the contrary, he professed cunningly to believe that my affliction was the result of the mere publication of the letter, thus making me pass for a vain man, very much affected by a satire against him. Vain or no, I *was* mortally afflicted. He knew it, and he did not write me a word. This tender friend, who has it so much at heart that my purse should be full, does not care in the least if my happiness be ruined!

"Another writing appeared in the same paper, and by the same hand, a libel, if possible, more cruelly injurious than the first. The author could not hide the rage caused him by the welcome that was given me in Paris. This publication did not affect me, because there was nothing left it could teach me. The libels now might succeed each other without moving me; and the inconstant public was growing tired of a subject which had occupied it some time. This was not what the conspirators wanted, who, wishing to destroy my reputation as an honourable man, chose by one means or

[1] Rousseau's meaning is perfectly clear, and he is not congratulating himself upon having dealt Hume an affront. He is showing that had Hume been without any knowledge of any cause of distrust, he would naturally have expected Rousseau to appeal to him; and that he would have complained or have inquired why Rousseau behaved as if he were without a friend in England. The argument is unanswerable—Hume knew perfectly well that Rousseau distrusted him.

another to reach their end; another method had to be tried.

"The matter of the pension was not concluded. It was not difficult for Mr. Hume, seeing the humanity of the minister, and the generosity of the prince, to get it settled. He was charged to inform me of the fact. He did this. This moment was, I confess, one of the most difficult I have known in my life. How much it cost me to do my duty! My first engagements, the obligation I felt to respond with gratitude to the kindness shown me by the king, the honour I recognized had been paid me by his attentions and those of his minister, my desire to show how sensible I was to all this, and also, I may admit, the advantage of being better off as age advanced, and before all manner of fresh ailments and worries assailed me, and above all, the difficulty of finding a courteous excuse for escaping from a benefit already half-accepted; all this made the necessity of renouncing the pension most difficult and cruel for me. Yet I had to do it, or else consent to become the most vile of men, by voluntarily accepting a boon from the man who had betrayed me.

"I did my duty then, but not without grief and pain. I wrote immediately to General Conway, with as much respect and courtesy as I could show, and without definitely refusing, I declined for the present to accept the pension. As for Mr. Hume, who had been the negotiator of the affair, the only one who had spoken to me about it, not only I did not reply to him, although he had written to me, but I did not mention his name in my letter. Here was the third slap in the face for my patron; if he does not feel this one, he must be in fault? Well, he does not feel it!

"My letter was not clear, and could not be so, for General Conway, who did not know the reasons for my refusal; but the letter was clear enough to Mr. Hume, who knew them perfectly well. Nevertheless, he pretended to misunderstand the reasons of my refusal and of my distress: and he wrote to tell me that the king's offer was

still open to me, if I changed my mind. You will judge, sir, that he did not expect a reply, and that I made none.

"About this time, I am not certain of the exact date, appeared a letter by M. de Voltaire, addressed to me, with an English translation, where the original was even given additional vigour. The noble object of this brilliant essay was to excite against me the hatred and scorn of the people who had given me a refuge. I did not doubt that my dear patron had assisted in this publication, especially when I remarked that whilst endeavouring to alienate from me all those who, in this country, were especially able to make life pleasant to me, the writer omitted to mention the man who brought me here. Evidently it was known that in so far as he was concerned nothing remained to be done: and that any effort to indispose him further against me would be superfluous. This name, so clumsily omitted, reminded me of what Tacitus said of the portrait of Brutus left out of a funeral pomp, that every one's attention was fastened on it, because it was not present.

"Mr. Hume, then, was not named: but the people with whom he lives were named. He has for friends all my enemies, as is well known, in other countries—the Tronchins, the d'Alemberts, the Voltaires; but what is worse, in London I have for enemies all his friends. And why, forsooth, should I have other enemies? What have I done to Lord Lyttelton, whom I don't know? What have I done to Mr. Walpole, whom I don't know either? What do they know about me, except that I am in misfortune, and the friend of Mr. Hume? What has he told them about me, since it is through him that they know me?

"At length, the time being come to strike the final blow, the effect is prepared by a new satire against me inserted in the papers. If there had been any doubt left me, how could it have survived this article, which contained facts known only to Mr. Hume?—facts changed, it is true, in order to render me odious in the eyes of the public.

"It is said in this article that I open my door to great people, but shut it against the simple and poor. Who knows anything about to whom I open, or shut, my door since I came to England, except Mr. Hume, with whom I have lived, and through whom have come all those who have visited me? One great person, it is true, may be excepted from this rule, whom I received, with great contentment, without knowing him; but whom I should have received with even greater contentment, had I known him. It was Mr. Hume who told me his name after he had left; when I heard it, I felt sorry he should have had to climb two storeys. As for the small and simple people, I know not what I am to say. I should have wished to see fewer people, but as I wished to displease no one, I let myself be guided by Mr. Hume: and I received as well as I could, all those he introduced to me, without making any distinction between their greatness or simplicity.

"In this same article it is said that I receive my relatives '*very coldly, to say nothing worse.*' This general assertion has for its authority the fact that I did once receive rather coldly the one relative whom I have outside of Geneva, and this happened in Mr. Hume's presence. It is then either Mr. Hume, or this relative himself, who has supplied this detail. Now my cousin, whom I have always known as a good relative, and an honest man, is not capable of contributing to a newspaper a satire against me; besides, limited by his state in life to commercial people, he does not mix with men of letters; nor with those who supply articles to newspapers; still less with those who deal in satires. Thus the article did not come from him. The most I can think is that Mr. Hume may have tried to draw him out, which is not very difficult; and then that Mr. Hume has distorted what he said, to serve his own views.

"It is said in this same article that I am in the habit of changing my friends frequently. Without much cunning one can see what this is meant to announce. Upon this

subject, let me point out what is true. I have friends of twenty-five and thirty years' standing. I have more recent friends, who are just as sure; and whom if I live I shall keep as long, or longer. I have not found, as a rule, such sure friends amongst men of letters. Thus I have changed my friends, sometimes; and I may change them again, if I suspect their sincerity; for I am determined never to keep a friend from considerations of worldly politeness; I only want friends whom I can love.

"If ever I had an assured conviction I have it now, when I say that Mr. Hume supplied the materials for this article. What is more, I am not only certain of this, but it appears to me perfectly clear that he wished I should know it. For how else can one explain how a man so adroit should have the awkwardness to betray his hand in it so patently?

"What was his object? Nothing is more plain. It was to excite my indignation to such a pitch that the final stroke he meditated might be more effective. He knows that the way to make me reckless of consequences is to make me angry; and he hoped to see me commit stupidities. One required in truth to have the self-possession of Mr. Hume, and to be phlegmatic and self-controlled as he is, to take, after all that had passed, the course he took. In the awkwardness of my position with General Conway, I could only use vague phrases; which Mr. Hume, in the character of my friend, interpreted as he pleased. Assuming then, although he knew well it was not true, that it was the clause about the secrecy of the pension which gave me pain, he obtained from the General the promise that he would get this clause altered. Then this stoical, insensible man wrote me the most friendly letter; where he told me that he had set to work to get this condition removed, but first of all he must be sure that I accepted upon this condition; so as not to expose his majesty to a second refusal.

"Here, then, he had reached the decisive moment, the goal of his endeavours. I had to make some reply—he

insisted upon that. In order that I should not escape the necessity, he sent Mr. Davenport a copy of his letter, and, in a separate note, he wrote to me that he could not remain in London any longer 'to look after my interests.' When reading this note my head nearly turned; I never in my whole life read anything so inconceivable.

"He has, then, at length forced from me the reply he so desired, and he is in haste to triumph over it. Already, writing to Mr. Davenport, he treats me as a ferocious man and a monster of ingratitude. But he must have more than this. All his measures are well taken, he believes; and no positive proofs against him can be brought forward. Now he demands a full explanation; he must have one—and here it is.

"Nothing more is needed to prove it true than this last fact:—standing alone it proves everything.

"Let us suppose the impossible: that not a word has reached Mr. Hume of my complaints against him; that he is as unconscious of them, as though he had been shut out from all intercourse with those who knew them; and as ignorant of them as though he had lived in China. But my conduct, between himself and me, my almost last words before we parted in London; my letter which followed them, indicating my anxiety and doubt; my silence afterwards, more significant than words; my public and bitter protest against the false Letter of the King of Prussia; my letter to the minister where his name was not mentioned; my refusal to benefit by a project carried through by him—all this spoke absolutely clearly: I will not say to any man who had any sentiment in his soul, but to any man who was not stupid and blind.[1]

"What!—after I had broken off all intercourse with

[1] Here there is the clear sense of Rousseau's words which Marmontel endeavours to distort, when he lends his tone of insulting triumph to Rousseau's exclamations. "*Premier, second, et troisième soufflet sur la joue de mon patron: il n'en sent rien.*" The real sense is quite clear: it is that he had given Hume repeated proofs that he suspected him; and that had Hume been honest, he would have made it his business to demand an explanation.

him for three months, after I had neglected to reply to any of his letters, never mind how important was the subject of them; surrounded as he was with the evidence of the affliction his faithless conduct gave me, this enlightened man of genius, naturally so clear-sighted and voluntarily so blind, can feel nothing, see nothing, hear nothing, and without one word of complaint, or justification, or explanations continues to give himself, independently of me, and in spite of me, the greatest possible trouble on my account? He even writes to me affectionately that he cannot stay any longer in London to serve me; as though there were an agreement between us that he should stay on there, for this purpose! This infatuation, this impassibility, and this obstinacy are not natural—they must be explained by other motives. Let us see this conduct in a clear light; for that is the decisive point.

"In this concern, Mr. Hume must necessarily be either the best or the worst of men—there is no other alternative. Let us see which of the two he is.

"In spite of so many signs of distrust and disdain from me, had Mr. Hume the astonishing generosity to still wish sincerely to serve me? But he knew that it was impossible for me to accept his kind assistance whilst I held the sentiments for him which I had conceived. He himself avoided all explanations: thus serving me, without justifying himself, he rendered all the trouble he took useless to me—he was not then generous.

"If he could suppose that, in my state of mind, I could accept services from him, he must have thought me an infamous person. But was it for an infamous man that he solicited a pension from the king with so much ardour? Can one believe anything so extravagant?

"But if Mr. Hume, following a settled plan, said to himself: 'Here is the moment to obtain my end; for by pressing Rousseau to accept the pension I shall compel him either to accept or refuse. If he accept,

with the proofs I have in my hands, I can completely dishonour him. If he refuse, after having before accepted, he must give his reasons: and here I wait for him; *if he accuse me, he is lost.*'

"If Mr. Hume reasoned like this, he followed a method very serviceable to his plan, and for this reason quite a natural one. And there is only this one way of explaining his conduct; which, upon any other theory, is inexplicable. If this be not clear now, nothing can make it so.

"The critical position he has reduced me to, recalls to me very forcibly the four words of which I have already spoken, and which I heard him ejaculate and repeat, in an epoch when I did not penetrate their importance. It was on the first night that followed our departure from Paris. We slept in the same room; and several times in the course of the night I heard him call out with extreme vehemence in French: '*Je tiens Jean Jacques Rousseau!*' I do not know if he were asleep or awake. The expression is a remarkable one in the mouth of a man who knows French too well to make any mistake about the sense and the force of the phrase. However, at the time, I took the words in a favourable sense; although the tone of voice did not encourage me to do so. It was a tone I can give no idea of by describing it, but it corresponded with the strange gaze I have mentioned. Each time he repeated these words, I felt an involuntary shudder; but in a moment I recovered myself, and laughed at my terror. The following day, I had so completely forgotten all about it that I never thought of it again throughout the time of my stay in London, and in the neighbourhood. I remembered it only here, where so many things have brought back these words to me, and recall them every moment.

"These words, and the voice that uttered them, sound in my heart as though I had just heard them pronounced; and I feel the sinister gaze fastened on me, and the little

taps on my back, and hear the '*Mon cher monsieur!*' of the man who answered thus the suspicion, that he might be a traitor! All this affects me so much that, confirmed by the events which have followed them, these memories suffice to destroy any return of confidence. And there is not a night now when these words, '*Je tiens Jean Jacques Rousseau,*' do not sound in my ears, as if I heard them uttered anew.

"Yes, Mr. Hume, I know it; you do hold me, but only by the circumstances that are external to me. You hold me, by the control of the opinions and judgments passed on me by men; you hold my reputation, my safety, perhaps. All the prejudices of others will put them on your side; it is easy for you to pass me off, as you have commenced to do, as a monster: and I see already the barbarous triumph of my implacable enemies. The public at large will not show me any more grace. Without examining into the facts, it always makes much of practical benefits bestowed, because every one is glad to invite such benefits by showing how he appreciates them. I foresee easily the end of all this; especially in this country, where you have brought me, and where, a stranger and without friends, I am almost at your mercy. Reasonable men, here and there, will nevertheless understand that, far from having sought this quarrel, it was the one most terrible thing which could befall me in the position where I am. They will feel that nothing but my invincible hatred for falsehood, and the impossibility with me of pretending to feel esteem and confidence when I have lost them, can have prevented me from dissimulating, when so many interests commanded me to do it. But reasonable people are few and far between: and it is not their voices that are clamorous.

"Yes, Mr. Hume, you hold me, by all the ties of this world: but you have no hold on my virtue, nor on my courage. Independent of you and of other men, they will remain, in spite of you, entirely my own. Do not think

you can alarm me by the fear of the destiny that waits for me. I know how to value the opinions of men; I am accustomed to their injustices; and I have learnt to bear them. If your part is taken, as I believe it is, be sure that mine is taken also. My body has grown enfeebled: but my soul was never more firm. Men must do and say what they will: it has little importance for me now. What is important is to finish as I have begun: to be true and upright to the end, let what will happen: and in my hour of misery, to be guilty of no cowardice, as in my hour of prosperity I was guilty of no insolence or pride. Never mind what opprobrium awaits me, nor what misfortunes threaten me, I am ready for them. I am to be pitied; but I am far less to be pitied than you are: and I leave you, for all my vengeance, the torment of respecting, in spite of yourself, the unhappy man whom you have ruined.

"When finishing this letter I am surprised at the strength I have had to write it. If one died of grief, I should have died before a line was written. All seems incomprehensible in what has passed! Such conduct as yours is out of the natural order; it is contradictory: and yet it is demonstrated to me as true. On both sides of me, an abyss! In one or the other I must fall, and perish. I am the most unhappy of human beings, if you are guilty: I am the most vile, if you are innocent. And you force me to desire to be this miserable object! Yes: the state where I should find myself crushed and prostrate beneath your feet, appealing to you for mercy, and doing everything to obtain it, publishing aloud my own indignity and rendering the most unqualified homage to your virtues, would be for my heart a state of freedom, ectasy and joy, after the suffocation and death you have plunged me into. There remains only one word more for me to say to you. If you are guilty, do not write to me: it would be useless; be assured you would not deceive me. But if you are innocent, deign to justify yourself. I know my duty; I love it, and shall always

love it, be it never so hard to perform. There is no state of abjection from which a heart that is not born abject, cannot revive. Once more, if you are innocent justify yourself. If you are not—farewell for ever."

The closing passage, which no loving student of Rousseau would miss, the onlooker at his misfortunes will deplore. It betrays the flaw in his armour: the vulnerable place, where the philosopher, invulnerable when he faces the treachery and malice of his enemies, falters and breaks down under a reaction of sensibility, when he looks back at his lost confidence in a friend. By thus ending his letter, he weakened the force of all that had gone before. He committed, with Hume, the same blunder he had committed with Grimm, some years earlier: of appealing to a recognized enemy in the tone, and with the effusion of wounded feeling, that would have reconquered an erring friend. And Hume was not slow to seize the advantage. He ignored all the definite charges made against him, which applied to his honest behaviour in the character of the self-offered protector of an exiled man of letters, whom he had persuaded, under the promise of finding him a retreat there, to seek a refuge in England. He chose to deal only with those reproaches of lack of sensibility, or of consideration, and delicacy, which, treated in a tone of contemptuous ridicule, might easily be represented as frivolous, purely sentimental or extravagant.

"I will reply, sir, to only one article in your long letter," he wrote on the 22nd July. The "one article" the good David considered it worth his while to deal with was, *not* the share he had taken in the composition and circulation of the false letter of the King of Prussia, where Jean Jacques was treated as an impostor, contemptuously insulted and derided by Frederic (who had shown him, on the contrary, distinguished consideration and esteem)—*not* his responsibility for the translation and publication of this Letter in a London paper, edited by his own publisher, Strahan, who was also his personal

friend; *not* his connection with other libels published in the same paper, where it was stated that the author of the *Discourse upon Inequality* shut his door in the face of small people but opened it to the great, and received coldly the members of his own family; *not* the grave charge of tampering with Rousseau's private letters, and basing upon information obtained by these dishonourable means, the false opinion and report that the man for whom he was soliciting a pension was not so poor as he pretended to be,—but the "one article" was, whether or no Rousseau had correctly given in his letter the account of the touching scene that took place between David and Jean Jacques on the eve of the latter's departure for Wootton! In the *Exposé succinct de la contestation qui s'est élevée entre M. Hume et M. Rousseau*, where Hume's account of the quarrel, translated into French by Suard and d'Alembert, was immediately published, to the delight of the Encyclopædists, and to the dismay of Rousseau's admirers, the same method was followed. Nor was this all, the real charges Hume would have found it difficult to answer were dismissed as unworthy of reply; but the purely imaginary benefits he was assumed to have conferred upon Rousseau were put forward as all sufficient proofs of the wickedness, or insanity, of a man whose false pride led him to repudiate all obligations of gratitude by quarrelling with his benefactors. The *Exposé succinct* appeared in October 1766.

On the 15th October, Grimm sent round *his* account of the affair to the *abonnés* of the *Correspondence*.

But before giving this account, which may be described as the last act in the campaign of secret calumny entered upon by the editor of the *Literary Correspondence* in June, 1762, we have to see in what way, keeping himself more cautiously in the background, but working as effectively as ever, Grimm had prepared the events we have been following, and carried through the plan he had marked out for himself to a successful issue.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSPIRATORS' TRIUMPH. THE PROPHET SILENCED AND LEFT BROKEN-HEARTED

In October 1765 the conspirators against Rousseau had seen themselves threatened with failure. To the editor of the *Literary Correspondence* especially the King of Prussia's offer to his victim Jean Jacques of a retreat near himself was terribly humiliating but also alarming. For months Grimm had been supplying his illustrious *abonné* with accounts of the atrocious conduct and doctrines of the author of the *Letters from the Mountain* in the way of destroying the peace of his country, and fomenting civil war. And now the most autocratic ruler in Europe showed appreciation of this criticism, by offering this ferocious demagogue and sower of sedition a retreat near himself!

Nor, although this was the worst, was it the only snub received by the editor of the *Literary Correspondence.* His "divine sovereign," the lady to whom he raised altars, and whom, in his character of a clumsy as well as a profane Saint John, he mystically described as "wisdom made flesh," manifested this wisdom also in a most irritating superiority to his influence. We have amongst the Neuchatel autographs the original letter of invitation addressed by the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha to Rousseau, after the trouble, secretly fomented by Grimm and Voltaire, had rendered Rousseau's continued residence at Motiers impossible. The Duchess commences by declaring that, although intellectual gifts command her admiration, a true and virtuous soul claims from her an even higher enthusiasm. She continues:—

"I have heard, sir, with grief about your persecu-

tions; and as I have also been told that you contemplate seeking a refuge at Berlin, I have begged you, by means of a letter written by your old friend, Klupffel, to take the road by Gotha, and to stop here for some days. I have also addressed the same request to Milord-Marshal; he has had the goodness to reply, and to give me reassuring tidings of you. At the same time, he gives me to understand that he does not think you are contemplating the journey so soon; unless I were to offer you an asylum with us. I gladly profit by this suggestion to assure you, sir, that if ever you stand in need of a retreat, you can never find one more safe and tranquil than with us; that here you will find waiting for you all the consideration and consolations you require; in a word, that you will be received with transports of satisfaction, and by the hands of friendship. Be persuaded, sir, that I enter into and share all your pains: that I long to help you: and that I am, with esteem, your affectionate friend."

Nothing could have been more disastrous to the schemes of the conspirators than Rousseau's acceptance of the retreat offered him by the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, except his perseverance in the long journey that would have landed him safely under the immediate protection of Frederic.

In the circumstances, the methods of persecution had to be altered. To commence with, now that he was outside of Switzerland, it would not be easy (his enthusiastic reception at Strasburg proved it) to persuade either governors or populace that the author of the *New Héloïse*, and of the *Confession of Faith of a Vicar of Savoy*, was a demagogue or a blasphemer. And then the visible cruelty of this incessant pursuit from place to place of a writer generally beloved, and of a man no longer young, known to be in ill-health, poor, and held back by his proud independence from accepting assistance, was beginning to exasperate the public temper; and to excite in high places a tendency to

demonstrations of exceptional honour and favour towards him by way of protest against the injustices he had suffered. The change of tone, and the new methods to be followed, showed themselves in the report circulated by Grimm that the lapidation of Rousseau by the peasants of Motiers was an imaginary outrage, invented by the alleged victim, as an excuse for changing his place of residence; and for escaping from the too tiresome religious exercises that, by way of protesting against his exclusion from the Sacred Table by the pastor Montmollin, he had imposed upon himself.

In short, whereas up to now the method of the secret calumniator had been to show in every place the public conscience revolted, and the rulers of states indignant, at the presence of this abominable, dangerous disturber of morals and of civil order, henceforth the method became to inculcate that no one would occupy himself with the wretched man, that people and rulers would be alike indifferent to him, if he did not go about stirring up quarrels, and compelling the authorities to persecute him, in order to gain for himself notoriety.

In accordance with this new plan of campaign, we have the account given by the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* of Rousseau's residence in Paris.

"*January* 1*st*, 1776.

"Jean Jacques Rousseau made his entrance into Paris on the 17th of December. The following day he promenaded in the Luxembourg in his Armenian costume: as no one had been warned, no one profited by the spectacle. M. le Prince de Conti has lodged him in the Temple, where the said Armenian holds his court daily. He also promenades daily at an appointed hour on the boulevards, near his residence.

"This affectation of showing himself in public without need, in defiance of the sentence of arrest out against him, has provoked the ministers, who had yielded to the entreaties of his protectors, to the extent of giving him

permission to pass through the kingdom on his way to England. They have had him warned by the police to leave Paris without delay, if he do not wish to be arrested. In consequence, he is to quit Paris on the 4th January, accompanied by Mr. David Hume, who returns to England for a time; but who means, if he is to be believed, to come back and pass a long time in Paris. Mr. Hume ought to love France, for he has received here the most singularly flattering welcome. Paris and the court have disputed which should show him most honour. Nevertheless, Mr. Hume is as bold in his philosophical writings as any philosopher in France. What is even more amusing is the fact that all the pretty women have run after him; and that the stout Scotch philosopher has shown himself delighted to be with them. He is an excellent man, David Hume, but he is heavy, has no warmth, grace, nor pleasant wit; no power of joining in the babble and chatter of those charming little machines that are called pretty women. O, what a strange people we are! To return to Jean Jacques. Here is a letter that went the round of Paris during his stay here, and which has had a great success." (False letter of King of Prussia follows.)

On the 15th April, 1766, Grimm gives his *abonnés* the news that Rousseau is stirring up trouble in England, and doing his best to irritate Frederic against her.

"M. Rousseau," he writes, "has taken very seriously this letter of the King of Prussia fabricated in Paris by M. Walpole. This writer has a natural disposition leading him to believe in plots and deeds of darkness; and hence, according to him, this letter conceals some mysterious and deep iniquity. As a matter of fact, the whole mystery lies in an effort *to give the public amusement at the expense of an author who is not amusing.* (Tout ce mystère se réduit à égayer un peu le public aux dépens d'un auteur qui n'est pas gai.) If the monarch took things as literally as the author does, if Frederic were as ill-natured as Jean Jacques, this letter

might become the cause of a bloody war. It has been printed in French and in English in the London papers, and M. Rousseau has just written to the *London Chronicle* the following letter," etc.[1]

It is now time to give Grimm's account of the quarrel between Rousseau and Hume, which I have called the "last act in his campaign of calumny," not because after the 15th October, 1767, Grimm ceased to calumniate Rousseau in his secret journal, but because we have reached the point when all that it was given to these conspirators to accomplish against their old friend Jean Jacques in their own epoch, was accomplished.

"Three months ago," wrote Grimm, "the first news of the rupture between Jean Jacques and David Hume reached Paris. A declaration of war between two great European powers could hardly have made more noise than this quarrel! I am speaking of Paris, for in London, where there are more important actors to hiss, the rupture that has come about between the ex-citizen of Geneva and the Scotch philosopher has been hardly known; and the English were foolish enough to take much less interest in this big affair than in the formation of the new ministry, and in the change of the great name of Pitt into that of Lord Chatham.

"But in Paris, all other news was barred out from the list of subjects of talk, for more than eight days; and the celebrity of the two combatants, whom it was amusing to picture belabouring each other, absorbed the attention of the public. The partisans of M. Rousseau were at first taken aback by this unexpected blow; and his *dévotes* were afflicted with frightful headaches. Up to this moment, the people with whom M. Rousseau had quarrelled after accepting benefits from them (and they are not a few) had always been pronounced to blame, without form of trial. The more reserve these persons showed in their complaints against the illustrious Jean Jacques, the less they deigned to air their grievances, the

[1] Letter follows as on p. 183.

more they were suspected, and openly accused by his devotees, of having done him grave wrong. The same attitude could not well be taken up in the case of David Hume. The joy that had been shown about his sympathy with Jean Jacques was too recent. The reciprocal praises which they had lavished on each other had been too much applauded. It had been too much counted upon, that the continuation of their good understanding would supply a terrible argument against M. Rousseau's old friends. Besides, M. Hume's rectitude and good nature were too well known in France; M. Rousseau's partisans themselves had praised so highly the zeal with which this new benefactor had worked to procure him a happy and tranquil lot in England. And, suddenly, the good David complains that his friend Jean Jacques has outraged him, in the most extraordinary and abominable manner! This adventure flung the party into strange perplexity. Only a confused account was to be had of the details of this case: the strangest and most extravagant, but at the same time the least interesting case, that has ever been kept in the remembrance of man. It was spoken of differently and at haphazard. M. Hume has sent the principal facts to M. d'Alembert, who found himself implicated in it, to his own surprise. M. Rousseau, on his side, has written to a publisher in Paris a letter, which I have not seen, but which this person has made public,[1] wherein M. Hume was defied to produce the letters which M. Rousseau had written him. It is said that this challenge was repeated in the London newspapers. In consequence, M. Hume has resolved to publish all his correspondence with M. Rousseau. It has just appeared, under the title of *Exposé succinct de la contestation qui s'est élevée entre M. Hume et M. Rousseau avec les pièces justificatives.* M. Suard has acted as M. Hume's editor and translator. I do not know why he says in his preface that M. Hume,

[1] Rousseau's Paris publisher, Guy, was forbidden by him to publish any account of the story.

when making this case public, has only yielded, with much reluctance, to the advice of his friends? No doubt, he is speaking of M. Hume's friends in England; for as to his friends in France, I know several who wrote to him with the express purpose of dissuading him from making this quarrel public. In effect, if you are forced to plead your cause before the public, I pity you with all my heart; and if without necessity you submit to be judged by it, I find you absurd. Count upon its malignant pleasure in laughing at your expense, and in its complete indifference to render justice to those who deserve it. And, for that matter, this indifference is not without justification of a sort, for by what right do you, as a private person, consider yourself of such importance that you ask me to lose my time over the question of your grievances? If your case implies any legal wrong done you, get it settled in the courts; but if noble and generous acts on your side have drawn you into a quarrel that the law neither can nor ought to meddle with, I don't see that you are to be pitied. Satisfy yourself with thinking that you have had the *beau rôle*, and learn to despise the vain opinions of others. But all this is well enough. It is written that men use the weapons of their trade; and that authors fight out their quarrels with the pen, as soldiers do with the sword. The author's battles are the most ridiculous; and M. Hume, who, up to now, had resisted the mania of engaging in them, has entered the lists out of fear of the legacy that may be allotted him in the last will and testament of Jean Jacques. It seems probable that so many honest men will be calumniated in this last will and testament, that the Scotch philosopher might have made up his mind to run the same risks as they do. In any case his *Exposé succinct* is certain to sell well. M. Suard, the only editor[1] of this *Exposé*, has introduced

[1] D'Alembert assisted Suard: and this is established by a letter of thanks from Hume to Suard, 19 Nov. 1766, quoted by Musset-Pathay and originally published in the *New Monthly Magazine*.

it with a notice by the editor, that he might just as well have omitted.

"I will not allow myself to pronounce a final judgment upon this case. As for M. Hume, although I have seen enough of him to know what to think about him, I have not the honour of being his intimate friend, and I cannot take the liberty of judging him. With M. Rousseau, the case is different. I was too intimately associated with him during eight years, and I know him so well, perhaps too well, not to be critical when it is a question of judging rigorously as they really are, the motives of his actions and gestures. It is now just nine years ago that I felt myself obliged to break off all relations with him, although I had no personal reasons to complain of him, and although he on his side had never reproached me with anything during the whole period of our intimacy. It seems probable that honesty and justice left me no choice between this rupture,[1] and the alternative of basely betraying the truth, and dishonestly hiding my real sentiments, upon a decisive occasion when M. Rousseau, most inopportunely, selected me for judge in a case, which I could decide with all the more confidence because I was an outsider; and when the complaints he put forward were much more ridiculous than his alleged grievances against Mr. Hume. I have always thought it an essential insult to any man to venture to confide to him revolting sentiments, in the hope that he will approve of them, or at any rate listen and let them pass in silence. This is virtually to say to one's friend, 'It pleases me to believe that you have no real honour or delicacy.' I know no graver offence than this. For the rest, I am tolerant with madness; but I require that even in hours of insanity a man should continue a man of honour. I may

[1] This account of the rupture between Rousseau and his old friends may be compared with the one given in June 1762—when it is Rousseau who quits the society of his old friends from whom he received friendship and esteem, to replace them by great people who flatter his vanity.

say that M. Rousseau is the only friend I have ever lost without having to regret his death. He quarrelled with all his friends whom we had in common; and repudiated them one after the other. He admits in one of his letters that he has often changed his friends: but he maintains that he has kept up his friendship with others during twenty-five and thirty years. I believe he would find it difficult to name a single person with whom he has kept up an intimacy for even ten years; for one cannot describe as a friend a man one knew in past times, without having had with him any intercourse or friendship during a long interval of time. I also believe that he has grave cause of self-reproach in connection with several of his old friends. But I do not count myself amongst these. I have never had—as is the case with several others—the happiness of rendering him essential services. Thus, at most, he can be taxed with injustice only in so far as I am concerned; and I willingly forgive him some bitterness against a man who often found himself compelled to tell him the truth, without softening it down to please him. It is not less true that since the time of our rupture I have never allowed myself to speak ill of him personally.[1] I felt that this respect was due to every broken intimacy. I have lived with people who did not like him; with his enthusiasts; and with people indifferent to him; and I have never departed from this rule. I have heard that M. Rousseau did not behave in the same way to

[1] Grimm's audacity here is astonishing! Taking him only as the editor of the *Correspondance Litteraire* he has incessantly called Rousseau a hypocrite, an impostor, a charlatan, an atrocious man, an ingrate and a traitor, who, if he got his deserts, would lose his head on the block: he has described him as the son of an assassin—a penniless adventurer, humiliated and degraded by his contempt of his employers; a cheat who professes to follow a trade he does not practise; a flatterer when his interests are to please, and insolent and ill-bred when his purpose is to act the cynic—an abject petitioner for services, and an odiously ungrateful receiver of them, etc. And yet this impudent falsehood, that he had never allowed himself to speak evil of Rousseau has been accepted literally by E. Scherer!

me, that he sought to injure me in the opinion of every one who would listen to him—and people listen willingly to evil speaking; that his accusations were calculated to do me so much the more harm, that he did not state any definite facts but implied the gravest things—that my reputation was utterly destroyed amongst his *dévotes*, and that amongst these *dévotes* are people of the highest rank. I venture to boast that none of these considerations have made me change my principles; and that I have kept so cool a head as to see in M. Rousseau's conduct towards me a proof of his esteem. For, as a matter of fact, he knew very well with what advantage I could have pleaded my own cause against him, by rendering public facts, and by producing documents, much more extraordinary than those recently published by Mr. Hume. But he judged that I would not make myself a spectacle for the public's amusement, even to enjoy the immortal honour of figuring in a comedy side by side with Jean Jacques; and he judged rightly. And if he suspected further, that I could laugh at the bad opinion of his *dévotes*, to whom I have given no right to think badly of me, he was also right. The persons whose names are suppressed in this case are Mesdames the Countess de Boufflers and the Marquise de Verdelin; the great prince is the Prince de Conti. The distinguished person who visited M. Rousseau in London is the hereditary Prince of Brunswick. M. Tronchin was once upon a time, by M. Rousseau's word, the greatest doctor in Europe: I have seen the certificate written by Jean Jacques' own hand more than once, and I rather think it stands recorded in his writings. But since M. Tronchin ventured to be angry when seeing the peace of his country troubled by the *Letters from the Mountain*[1] (a sentiment that one cannot feel without being the mortal enemy of M. Rousseau), he has been justly deprived of the title of the greatest doctor in Europe, and has become the mountebank (*le jongleur*),

[1] See Note I on Tronchin, Appendix.

as every one knows ; for all talent and all virtue depend upon how one stands with regard to J. J. Rousseau. Looking at his long letter from the literary point of view exclusively, his friends have maintained that it is a masterpiece of eloquence, and that the peroration especially is profoundly pathetic ; but they forget that true eloquence consists in giving to every subject the tone which suits it. If you treat small matters and absurdities with an emphasis that the most tragic events could hardly claim, you may make a show of eloquence, but you will pass for mad. Don Quixote, who takes windmills for giants, and fights against them to the death, is certainly full of courage, heroism, and noble valour : but he is also more ridiculous than valiant. For my part, the grand sword-thrusts directed against windmills affect me so little that I prefer in this collection the letter of Mr. Horace Walpole to Mr. Hume, because this letter has character in it, and I have a great liking for character.

"To sum up, I think no one can read this strange case without feeling profound pity for this unhappy Jean Jacques ; for if he does offend his friends, one must agree that he also hurts himself even more than them. And what a deplorable life it is, which consumes itself in these foolish and painful agitations ! I defy his worst enemy to have suggested to him, in his present position, a more fatal step than the one he has taken in quarrelling with Mr. Hume without the shadow of a reason. I was always persuaded that he took a false step when preferring England to other places of refuge ; but I did not expect so prompt and extraordinary a revolution. One can easily foresee that he will not long be able to reside in this delicious retreat of Wootton. And that the first new complaint will be against his friend Mr. Davenport, and the second against the English nation. *But it is not easy to see in what corner of the globe Jean Jacques can end his days in tranquillity.* It appears evident that he drags after him a companion who will not allow him

to find repose anywhere. He will, at any rate, have for some months the sweet satisfaction of preparing a reply to the *Exposé succinct* of Mr. Hume. If my conjectures are verified, those of his friends and enemies who do not get a slap across the face in this reply may think themselves lucky. Jean Jacques was born two hundred years too late. His true vocation was that of a reformer, and he would have had the same sweetness of soul as Jehan Chauvin Picard. In the sixteenth century he would have founded the Brothers Rousses, or the Roussaviens or Jean Jacquists; but in our century no one makes proselytes, and the most burning prose does not persuade the idle reader to quit the book and become the author's disciple."

The prophecy and the conjectures which close Grimm's article command attention. The conjectures about Rousseau's reply to the *Exposé succinct* proved untrue. Invited by his editors, Guy of Paris, and Michel Rey of Amsterdam, to send them his answer to Hume's attack, Rousseau refused to take up the discussion.

"I hear," he wrote to the Paris publisher, "that M. Hume describes me as a scoundrel (*un scélérat*) and as a vile blackguard (*vile canaille*). Were I capable of replying to one who gives me these names, I should deserve them."

To a private correspondent, who urged that his own case ought to be clearly stated, he explained the reasons for his silence more definitely.

"I had with Mr. Hume," he wrote, "an acquaintanceship of three months, which it became impossible for me to continue. After the first moments of indignation caused me by his behaviour, I withdrew from this acquaintanceship quietly. He wished for a formal rupture, and so this had to be. After that, he insisted upon an explanation; I consented to give one. All this passed between him and me. He has judged proper to make all the public outcry you know about—but he has done it alone. I have held my tongue, and shall

continue to do so ; and I have nothing to say about Mr. Hume except that he appears rather too insulting for the good-natured man (*le bon homme*) he passes for, and rather too noisy for a philosopher."

As for the prophecy that "Jean Jacques would not long be able to reside at his delicious retreat at Wootton, and that it was not easy to see in what corner of the globe he would be able to end his days in tranquillity," when it was uttered, in October, 1766, there seemed no reason why it should find fulfilment. A short time before, Rousseau had written to Dupeyrou that he had recovered serenity, and was resolved to occupy himself with other interests.

"I try," he said, "to close every door against afflicting news ; I have given up reading public papers, I do not reply to correspondents, which should, in the end, stop their letters of advice ; I talk only upon indifferent subjects with the only neighbour with whom I can converse, as he is the only one who knows French. It was not possible at first for me not to be affected by this frightful revolution towards me in public feeling, which I doubt not has spread through Europe. But this emotion did not last long ; serenity has returned to me, and I hope it will endure."

It was not to be permitted to endure. He had resigned himself to be falsely judged by the public, believing that he had still a stronghold in the affection of a few friends.

But the foundations of this faith were also to be shaken.

To commence with, Grimm had good cause for his triumph in the falling away from Jean Jacques of the great ladies[1] who had been his *dévotes* in the old romantic days of his sojourn at Montmorency ; since then, during his three years of exile, they had followed him in his misfortunes with sympathy ; but with failing

[1] *The Maréchale de Luxembourg, Countess de Boufflers* and *Marquise de Verdelin ;* the last lady remained faithful to him.

interest. David Hume had become the philosopher of their predilection, in Jean Jacques' absence. True, the attitude taken up by the Countess de Boufflers in her letter to Hume was not entirely approving. She had reproached him with lack of generosity and of consideration towards an unfortunate man, whose position appealed to this superior, as well as more fortunate, being for compassion. But of Rousseau himself she has nothing more to say than that he is *not* an impostor or a scoundrel! In all probability Hume handed round this epistle, for in a letter from Jean Jacques of a later date to his *ex-dévote* there is a phrase which refers to Madame de Boufflers' opinion that he ought to have doubted not only the evidence of others, but the testimony of his own eyes, rather than suspect Hume. This sentence does not occur in her letter to Rousseau. But to him, also, she had written in a tone she had never assumed before, and where the *dévote* of other days revealed herself as the angry protectress.

"Mr. Hume has sent me, sir, the outrageous letter you have written to him. I never read one like it! All your friends are in consternation and reduced to silence. And what, indeed, are they to say for you, sir, after a letter so little worthy of your pen; and which you cannot possibly justify, never mind how aggrieved you may think yourself? Had you even acquired all the proofs imaginable of the most wicked plot, you should have been more moderate in your anger against a man who has really served you. The ties of friendship are worthy of respect, even when they are broken, and even the appearance of this sentiment is worthy of it. M. le Prince de Conti, Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg and I, await impatiently your explanation of this unaccountable behaviour. I beg you, sir, not to delay giving it; let us know how to excuse, if we cannot exonerate you."

Rousseau's answer to this letter was given in the tone that, in the circumstances, he was entitled to take

towards a lady whose friendship he had accepted without seeking it; and whose *protégé* he had, by the incessant refusal of material favours, refused to become.

"*Wootton, August 20th,* 1766.

"One thing, madam," he wrote, "gives me pleasure in the letter you did me the honour to write to me on the 27th of last month, and which I have just received. It is to know that you are in good health. You say, madam, that you have never seen a letter like the one I have written Mr. Hume? This may very well be, for neither have I ever before seen anything like the circumstances which led to it. But in any case, this letter does not resemble those Mr. Hume writes about me; and I hope never to produce any letters of that sort.

"You ask me what are the wrongs of which I complain. Mr. Hume has forced me to tell him that I saw his secret manœuvres. He has also compelled me to enter into minute details by way of an explanation. He must render you an account of all this. As for me, I complain of nothing.

"You reproach me with yielding to odious suspicions. My reply is that I have yielded myself to no suspicions. Perhaps, madam, you might have taken to heart some of the lessons you give me, and have shown yourself less in haste to decide that I am on the alert to believe in treachery.

"All you say in Mr. Hume's favour constitutes a very strong argument, extremely reasonable, of great weight: I fully recognize its reasonableness, and I do not dispute its strength: but arguments lose weight when they are contradicted by facts. I refrain from judging Mr. Hume's character, which I do not know. I only judge his conduct towards me, which I do know. Perhaps I am the only man he ever hated: but then what a hatred it must be. Could one heart contain two of this sort?

"You would wish me to disbelieve in evidence? This

is what I did as long as I could. That I should reject even the testimony of my own senses? that is a counsel more easy to give than to follow. That I should not have believed what I felt, but should have consulted my friends in France? But if I must neither believe what I see, nor yet what I feel, why am I to believe people who do not see nor feel what I experience? What, madam! when in my full sight a man plunges a knife into my breast, before daring to say that I am stabbed, must I ask others whether he has really struck me?

"The extreme passion you discover in my letter, madam, makes me think you can hardly have been entirely dispassionate when you read it; or else that the letter you have seen has been falsified. In the unhappy circumstances when that letter was written, and when Mr. Hume forced me to write it, knowing well he could use it against me, I dare to affirm that it needed strength of soul to show so much moderation. But only the sufferer knows how hard it is to ally mildness and grief. Mr. Hume acted otherwise, I admit. To me he replied in honest and decent language; he wrote to M. d'Holbach and to other people, in very different terms. He has filled Paris, France, and the newspapers of Europe, with things my pen does not know how to write, and does not deign to reproduce. Was this, madam, what you would have wished me to do?

"You say that I should have moderated my anger against a man who had really served me. In my long letter of the 10th July, I weighed with the most attentive equity the services Mr. Hume has rendered me. It became me to let the balance lean on his side. But if all these great services were as real as they are ostentatious, if they were so many traps covering cruel designs, I do not see that they claim my gratitude.

"'*The ties of friendship are worthy of respect even when they are broken.*' This is true—but it takes for granted that these ties have existed. Unfortunately, on my side they did exist: and for this reason I have from

self-respect suffered, and, whilst I was allowed to do so, held my tongue.

"'*And even the appearance of this sentiment deserves respect.*' Here, madam, is the most amazing maxim I ever heard! What? From the moment that a man takes publicly the mask of friendship to be able to injure me more easily, from the moment that he kisses me as a preliminary step to assassinating me, I must not venture to defend myself, nor ward off his blow, nor complain of his treachery, even to himself? I can hardly believe this is what you wished to say; yet when re-reading this phrase in your letter, I can discover in it no other meaning.

"I am grateful to you, madam, for the care you wish to give to my defence; but I do not accept it. Mr. Hume has so completely thrown aside his mask, that his conduct speaks quite clearly to every one who does not wish to remain blind. But even if that were not the case, I do not wish any one to justify me, because I do not require justification; nor do I wish them to excuse me, because that would be unworthy of me. I would only wish that, in the depths of misfortune where I am plunged, people whom I honour would write me less distressing letters; so that I might at least retain the consolation of keeping unspoiled all the sentiments they inspire me with."

Far more constant in her affection for Rousseau than the Countess de Boufflers, Madame de Verdelin was only interested in David Hume as a serviceable friend to her poor Jean Jacques. She did not write calling him to account. Nevertheless she also wounded him, and forfeited his confidence, by her well-meant efforts to persuade him that he was mistaken in supposing that Hume had any share in the letter from the King of Prussia.

"Mr. Hume never gave me the impression of a false man," she wrote; "and I believe his enemies and yours have woven the web of this entangled affair. In Paris,

he had not seen the letter of the King of Prussia—at least I do not believe he had: because Mr. Walpole, when giving it to a woman who knew he had written it, said to her: 'Don't show it to Mr. Hume: he is infatuated with his little man;' that is what this woman told me. But it is useless to rake up all this! you say that Milord-Marshal replied to you that no one can properly judge of a case but those who stand near to it. My dear neighbour, I am of this opinion too; only when one is near, any foreign body may obscure one's sight, and sometimes it is wise to look at things in different lights. Alas! in no light can one discover what interest Mr. Hume can have in injuring you; also in this country not a soul will believe it."

Madame de Verdelin's argument, and the one that influenced Lord-Marshal Keith, was exactly the one employed by modern critics.

"Men do not act without motives," argues Mr. Morley,[1] "and Hume could have no motive in entering into any plot against Rousseau, even if the rival philosophers in France might have motives. It would be as unwise in us, as it was in Rousseau himself, to complicate the hypothesis."

Unfortunately, however, the hypothesis was complicated. By that wretched "pleasantry," which vanity and *bonhomie* combined, had induced the good David to contribute to the satire against Jean Jacques, circulated in Paris, whilst he was waiting there in the character of the satirised man's protector, Hume *had* associated himself with the philosophers in France who had entered into a plot to dishonour Rousseau. And from that hour he found himself, through want of moral courage to disentangle himself from either set of obligations, pledged to the double rôle of satisfying the Countess de Boufflers, the Prince de Conti, the Maréchale de Luxembourg, and the Marquise de Verdelin, by establishing Rousseau comfortably in England; and of satisfying also the society

[1] *Rousseau*, vol. ii., chap. vi., p. 292.

of the Baron d'Holbach by placing their "pleasantries" in the English papers. Thenceforth Hume's motive became to soothe his own conscience, and (when he discovered that Rousseau recognized him as the English editor of the Encyclopædists' "pleasantries") to rob him of the right to reproach him, by pushing forward diligently the affair of the pension. If Rousseau accepted it, so much the better; he would show himself a sensible man at last, and able to recognize that a good solid pension covers a multitude of libels. But if he refused it—well, then Hume would have a good case; and could safely and loudly complain of the abominable ingratitude of a "miscreant," who forgot all practical services rendered him, to stir up strife about some trifling newspaper "pleasantries."

So that Hume's conduct to Rousseau, seen in the true light, was not without intelligible motives. And Rousseau himself, although he did not see the motives rightly, was entirely right, and had good grounds to know that he was right, about the facts. What was cruel to him was that those he had counted upon as friends refused to believe him, when he spoke of what he felt and saw! It must not be forgotten that he had seen the same methods of anonymous libels now followed in England, prepare for him in Switzerland, persecutions and outrages which, were they to befall him now, would find him more isolated than he had ever been, and completely at the mercy of his enemies. There was no possible doubt as to the source, and intentions, of the libels. It was the familiar plan of the well-organized plot to irritate heads of the government against him, by painting him as a mischievous sophist, a founder of sects and a fomenter of disorder; to rob him of friends, by accusing him of odious ingratitude to his benefactors; to stir up the hatred of the populace against him by insinuating that vile and nameless crimes disfigured his private life, that he was a hunter after notoriety, and a hypocrite who professed to espouse the cause of the poor,

but who turned his back upon them in reality, and fawned upon great people.

No doubt, either, existed that the men who in France and Switzerland had organized and directed this plot must have some agent in England possessing sufficient power over the press to enable him to circulate their attacks upon a famous writer who, before the libels began, enjoyed great popularity. Nor was there any doubt that Hume possessed this power over the English press ; and that he was on intimate terms, and in close correspondence, with Rousseau's enemies. These were not matters of suspicion with him, but of knowledge. And when he stated these facts as proofs of Hume's treachery, the reply was—that Hume had no interest in deceiving him!

Inasmuch as Madame de Verdelin did not, like the Countess de Boufflers, assume the tone of an injured protectress, Rousseau, when replying to her, shows less indignation and more disappointment. He repeats the argument used to Madame de Boufflers : that a man who sees his foe plant a dagger in his breast, does not need to consult other people before affirming that he is stabbed. This letter concludes in a tone of friendship, and he promises to write to her again. But it does not appear in his correspondence that he did so. Madame de Verdelin wrote to him on several occasions : and always used towards him the same tone of devoted affection and unspoiled esteem. But in so far as Rousseau went, the breach in his confidence was made. It widened as years went on. And when he wrote the *Confessions*, he did her injustice. At that time he recognized the error he had committed in not accepting Frederic's invitation ; and looking back to the influence exercised by Madame de Verdelin's persuasions, he formed the idea that her zealous efforts to induce him to renounce the journey to Berlin, and to go with Hume to England, were made at the instigation of his enemies.

But the fatal blow was yet to come : the downfall of

the confident friendship he had trusted in, as his tower of strength which no craft nor force of his enemies could alter or overthrow. With a certain knowledge that did not need any confirmation of facts, Rousseau had proudly quoted to Madame de Verdelin what would have been the Lord-Marshal's answer to any one who accused him of yielding to false suspicions.

"Do you know, madame, what the Lord-Marshal would have done, had any one told him this? He would have replied 'it is not true,' and would not have deigned to mention the matter to me."

Rousseau wrote to Lord-Marshal Keith on the 9th August; he had become already anxious before a reply reached him, and had written again. On the 5th September he heard. Nothing could be more affectionate, and almost tender, than the reply—yet it was evident that the Lord-Marshal, too, thought Jean Jacques had yielded to "suspicions," or else had allowed himself to be deceived!

"You say," wrote the Lord-Marshal, "'if they write and tell you I have voluntarily done something dishonest and unjust you may rest persuaded it is untrue.' This was an unnecessary precaution; for I shall never believe you could be voluntarily dishonest or unjust; and I shall always do my best to confirm others in this view."

Nevertheless, he goes on to declare that he regrets more than he can say his absence from England when all this took place; that he feels sure he could have prevented the rupture by proving to Rousseau that David was his true friend. "It is with great grief," he writes, "that I foresee your enemies will not fail to attribute to Mr. Hume the mischievous proceedings which have brought about this quarrel." Rousseau writes back that nothing his other enemies could attribute to Hume could exceed the malignant treachery he has shown in this affair. But the Lord-Marshal will not have it so. He insists that it is impossible Hume should have been a disguised enemy. Some one else must have

inserted the libels in the English papers. Worst of all, in his efforts to appease Rousseau, he takes the very course calculated (had the mistake been made by any one else) to anger him. He writes to Dupeyrou without telling Rousseau he has done this; and urges this by no means good diplomatist to endeavour to exert persuasion over Jean Jacques. Dupeyrou can do nothing better than confide the Lord-Marshal's confidences to Rousseau! Wounded by any semblance of disguise with him, Rousseau wrote a letter we do not possess in his correspondence, and one which d'Alembert afterwards endeavoured to maintain was full of "injurious reproaches" to his "benefactor." That the original letter contained nothing injurious or offensive, although it was reproachful, the Lord-Marshal's letter to the bad diplomatist, Dupeyrou, establishes.

LETTER FROM THE LORD-MARSHAL TO DUPEYROU, NOV. 28, 1766

"I have received a letter from M. Rousseau: complaints against me, made with great mildness (*des plaintes contre moi avec bien de la douceur*). 1st, for having wrongly understood his refusal of the pension; 2nd, upon what I wrote to you. As I write from memory, and as my memory often fails me, I can't recollect what I said to you in the letter he speaks of; all I know is that I wrote to you in the only intention and hope that you might deliver him from these suspicions of Mr. Hume, which I foresaw every one would esteem unjust; I tried all I could to alter them before this quarrel broke out; and you are very well able to judge whether it was as a friend or as an enemy that I wrote. I still esteem him a virtuous man; but embittered by his misfortunes, carried away by his feelings and not willing to listen enough to his friends. It is a great affliction to me, loving tranquillity and hating contention, to have to enter into this quarrel between two friends whom I esteem. I believe my best plan will be to take the

course necessary to my own peace of mind; and neither to say anything, or listen to anything more about this unlucky affair. Farewell, I embrace you with all heart."

To Rousseau himself he wrote:[1] ". . . Most certainly I had no wish to injure your friendship with M. Dupeyrou. I had tried to cure you of your suspicions of Mr. Hume. I had not succeeded. It seemed to me they would injure you. I hoped M. Dupeyrou might take them away and help to assuage this unhappy quarrel with Mr. Hume. . . . I am old and infirm; I have very little memory left: I do not recollect clearly what I wrote to M. Dupeyrou: but I am quite positive my only desire was to serve you by quieting a quarrel founded, as I think, on wrong suspicions. Perhaps I have committed some stupidities. To avoid anything of the sort in the future, do not find it wrong if I abridge our correspondence, as I have already done in the case of my near relatives and friends, in order to finish my days in peace. I say abridge only. For I should desire from time to time to have news of your health, and to know it is good. Good-night."

Rousseau's reply shows him already plunged in despair.

"*December* 11*th*, 1766.

"Abridge our correspondence! Alas, milord, what do you announce to me, and in what a moment! Am I in your disgrace? Ah, amongst all the misfortunes that overwhelm me, here is the only one I cannot endure. If I have done wrong, deign to pardon me; is there any fault in me that my sentiments for you cannot redeem. Your goodness to me makes all the consolation of my life; will you take it from me, this last and unique consolation? . . . If you hold to this cruel resolution I shall die of it. But that is not the worst. I shall die in grief: and I predict you will regret it. I await a reply from you in mortal anxiety: but I know

[1] Streckeisen-Moultou, vol. ii., p. 154; letter lxxxvi.

your soul, and this reassures me. If you could feel how necessary this reply is to me, I am sure you would send it me promptly."

It seems hardly possible the kind old man would have remained obdurate to this appeal, had he read it. The probable explanation is that, to protect himself from weakness, he decided not to open these letters himself. At Wootton, Jean Jacques waited, and hoped; and then lost hope. With the downfall of his last tower of strength hope fell down. He saw himself worsted in this conflict in the night with secret foes who made him an exile in all lands, and an alien from all his friends. Thérèse brought him tidings of the ill-treatment she received from the country people, and even in Mr. Davenport's household. The repetition of the Motiers outrages seemed to threaten. In what precise way this vague uneasiness became quickened to panic, no evidence shows. But on the 1st May 1767, Grimm's prophecy was fulfilled. Rousseau fled from his pleasant retreat at Wootton and from England, his "whole soul become the home of weariness and torment."

CHAPTER VI

THE DESTRUCTION OF SORROW—THE 24TH FEBRUARY 1776

Our criticism has not only covered the period of Rousseau's life when all his great works were produced; but has also reached the end of the campaign of secret calumny entered upon by the editor of the *Literary Correspondence* in June 1762.

This does not mean that after May 1767 Grimm ceased to calumniate "his old friend Jean Jacques" in his secret journal, and elsewhere. Nor does it mean that his full designs, and those of his fellow conspirator Diderot, were carried through. It means only that the mischief these conspirators had power to accomplish against Rousseau in his lifetime was accomplished at this date; and that afterwards he had passed beyond their power; there remained nothing more that they could do.

Let us see what they had accomplished. They had not made the false reputation of him as a sophist and an impostor accepted by the sovereigns of Europe, nor by the cultivated people in all countries, who continued enthusiastic readers of his works. They had not, even after the quarrel with Hume, disturbed the special respect felt for him amongst other philosophers and men of letters on account of his disinterested life, his loyalty to great principles, his sincerity and his independence. They had not succeeded in altering the popular verdict recorded in the fact that, whilst other conspicuous men were called the "great," the "celebrated," the "learned," etc., Jean Jacques alone was called the "virtuous." Nor, although they had succeeded in

alienating from him the two great ladies, the Countess de Boufflers and the Maréchale of Luxembourg, who had once been called his *dévotes*, had they been able to spoil the devotion to the author of the *New Héloïse* and of *Emile* of the women of his epoch, in all ranks of society, and even in the households of philosophers. In other words, they had not altered, and could not dispute, the fact, that the "monster," the "demon," "the artificial scoundrel," the miserable Jean Jacques, of their painting, reigned to the end of his life the best loved man in his epoch in the hearts of what was most beautiful, most romantic, most pure, and most tender, amongst the populations of Europe.

But what had been accomplished by the leaders of this secret conspiracy (and not at all by "the magistrates and religious doctors," who were Rousseau's open persecutors) was the breaking down of his faith and confidence in his power to reach the hearts of his fellow men to serve them, and in the good-will towards him, and justice rendered him, by his contemporaries, outside of the ring of his personal enemies. When this faith and confidence were extinguished, the conspirators' work was done. The eloquent prophet was silenced for ever: and the best loved man of his epoch isolated by a mysterious surrounding cloud of calumnies and suspicions he felt that he could neither penetrate nor disperse. So that he lived the last ten years of his life, and died, broken-hearted; believing that he had become an object of scorn and reprobation to his contemporaries.

But even so, the triumph of his secret persecutors was incomplete. Their power to injure him stopped short precisely where he himself, in his letter to David Hume of the 22nd July 1766, fixed the limit.

The hidden enemies had the power—or, at least, after the downfall of Lord-Marshal Keith's friendship, the broken-hearted man believed they had obtained the power—to influence the judgment passed upon him by society and the public; to spread everywhere the

opinion that he was stained with odious crimes; to create repugnance for him in the minds of worthy men and gentle-hearted women; to spoil old affections, and rob him of new ones; to threaten his security; to hamper his independence; to spoil his leisure; to condemn him to die in grief, convinced that a libellous portrait of him would be handed down to posterity. But all this was external to himself. They had no power to alter his character: to change the natural man, Jean Jacques Rousseau, from what he actually was; nor to render him faithless to the rule of life he had chosen for his own—*vitam impendere vero.*

To establish that this was literally exact,—that the personality and the rule of life of the broken-hearted Rousseau who wrote the *Confessions*, the *Dialogues* and the *Reveries* continued the unaltered personality and rule of life of the prophet Rousseau—would need a criticism following the same exact historical methods that have here been used to discover his true actions and experiences in the period when all his great works were written.

The purpose of this criticism was announced at the commencement of the present work to be the removal of the barriers which false theories about Rousseau's personality have placed in the way of the attentive study of his books, and of a just appreciation of his teachings and influences as a philosopher. This purpose has been accomplished: the student of Rousseau's philosophy is now free to enter upon his task, convinced that the man who gave the world what is called, and what we may continue to call, "The gospel according to Jean Jacques Rousseau," was not a "moral crétin"; not a "diseased maniac"; not a double-natured being, superficially susceptible to fine impressions, but a man in the "slime" of whose under nature, "reptiles were vaguely swarming."

It is of supreme importance for such a student, desiring to know as he really was the prophet who "first in our modern world sounded a new trumpet note for

one more of the great battles of humanity"—to recollect that the eight works wherein the gospel according to Jean Jacques stands fully recorded, viz., the two *Discourses*, the *New Héloïse*, the *Letter to d'Alembert*, the *Social Contract*, *Emile*, the *Letter to Christopher de Beaumont*, and the *Letters from the Mountain*, were all conceived and produced *before* Rousseau's faith and confidence in his power to serve his contemporaries, and in the justice they rendered him, had been shaken by the experiences he underwent at Motiers Travers, when daily, and for eight months before the final outrage, "his heart was torn by the spectacle of the hatred of the people."

In other words, it has to be realized that the prophet Rousseau differs from the author of the *Confessions* and of the *Dialogues* in this : that he was *not* broken-hearted. That the confidence and faith which sustained his inspiration had not departed from him. That his outlook upon life was not darkened and distorted by the misery and bewilderment caused him, at a later period, by the mysterious power and far-reaching influence which he then saw obtained by his secret enemies to poison against him the whole mind of Europe.

One question, and one question only, connected with the broken-hearted Rousseau concerns a criticism where the purpose is to arrive at a just appreciation of the mind and character of Rousseau, the philosopher. It will be said that no amount of suffering or sorrow can produce madness where the seeds of madness do not already exist; and that when studying the philosophy and social theories of this eloquent prophet, it should not be lost sight of that this man, whose genius his most adverse critics recognize, was undeniably, at the end of his life, (and conspicuously so when he wrote the *Dialogues*), in the most real and literal sense of the term, mad.

Here, then, is the last question that, in conclusion, has to be answered by examination of evidence. Can it be not only affirmed, but proved, that Rousseau, when his

last works were written, was not only broken-hearted, but, in the real and literal sense of the term, mad?

Rousseau's English biographer, whose conclusions have been proved so often to be based on false impressions, affirms it:

"The *Dialogues*," writes Mr. Morley, "cannot possibly have been written by a man who was in his right mind."

Now the purpose Rousseau had, when he wrote the *Dialogues*, was to establish that he was the victim of a conspiracy to destroy his good name throughout Europe and to create for him the reputation of a sophist and an impostor. The original authors of this plot he recognized to be Grimm and Diderot; but the influence of these two men in the circle of the Baron d'Holbach, upon the promulgators of gossip and scandal in salons, the press and in society, gave an enormous circulation to the calumnies destined to ruin him in public opinion, and to excite against him animosities that would engage those who felt them to actively carry forward the work of his defamation.

The results obtained by our criticism have shown us that Rousseau's belief in the existence of this plot, based upon facts of his experience, was no insane delusion; that the conspiracy actually existed; that the authors of it were the two men whom he suspected; and that, in so far as they were concerned, he neither exaggerated their malice towards him, nor misunderstood their designs.

Having asserted that this conspiracy was the cause of the misfortunes that pursued him, the author of the *Dialogues* endeavoured to trace the operations and methods employed by the conspirators. With absolute fidelity to truth he related how these operations had affected him; how persecutions had been stirred up against him by false reports of his books, when the books themselves, proscribed and burnt directly they appeared, could only be obtained with difficulty. How men in power had been encouraged to see in him a sower of

disorder; and the public, a blasphemer of religion. How his protectors had been indisposed towards him; his friends detached from him; the admirers of his writings discouraged in their enthusiasm—by the information that this fine writer did not believe a word he wrote, and violated all the principles he professed, in his actions.

Here, again, the study we have given to the *Literary Correspondence* has proved to us that, although Rousseau knew only by their results the methods of calumny followed by his secret adversaries, he suffered from no delusions, and indulged in no exaggerations, but described with perfect accuracy the actual processes of his persecutors.

In all this, then, there is no madness. Nor is there anything that deserves this description in the pathetic, passionate appeal of the broken-hearted victim of this long and cruel persecution "to all men loving truth and justice" to examine the facts of his life; to study in his writings the principles he has actually professed; to prove to themselves by this evidence that he is not the monster his enemies have painted; and, before the false sentence against him has been authoritatively recorded, to unmask the impostors. So much, then, for the supposition that the *Dialogues* prove their author insane. But when the book was written, does not the terror felt by Rousseau lest his secret enemies should falsify or destroy this appeal made to "all men loving truth and justice" to investigate his case, and do not the methods he used to preserve the manuscript, prove that, at this period, he was not in his right mind?

Here, again, let us examine this assumption in the light of evidence—and we shall discover in this episode the supreme proof that, whilst, no doubt, Rousseau's outlook upon life was darkened, so that the world external to himself was filled with confusion and despair, in the sphere of conscience and reflection, where reason reigns, he retained all his faculties unaltered; keeping the same

clear judgment, the same distinction of the moral sentiment, the same high rule of conduct, as in his happier days,—in other words, that, although broken-hearted, he continued "in his right mind."

The story is told in a supplementary chapter added on to the *Dialogues*, entitled, "The History of this Work." Here Rousseau relates how, after long ponderings and searchings out of a method by which the manuscript can be saved from destruction at the hands of his enemies, he had conceived the wish to have it deposited, under the direct protection of the King, in some public library, where the royal seal would guarantee its safety. But how could this favour be obtained? Inasmuch as no man he knew could be trusted to plead his cause with the King, he would urge this cause in the name of the justice more than human that, even in palaces, has supreme control. His idea was to take the manuscript of the *Dialogues* with him to Nôtre-Dame; and, seizing the moment after the service, when the priests had retired, but before the people had dispersed, to mount the chancel steps, and place his book on the High Altar. The sensation this act would produce, the scandal it would cause, would necessarily compel his arrest; and the public explanation he would thus have the opportunity of giving of the motives of his action would certainly reach the young King's ears, and might induce him to accord the protection thus solemnly claimed from him.

All this traced out in his imagination, "on Saturday, the 24th February 1776, at about two o'clock," as Rousseau relates himself, with pathetic exactitude, he started for Nôtre-Dame.

"I wished," he writes, "to enter by one of the side doors, by which I intended to enter the chancel. Surprised to find the first door shut, I tried another side door, lower down, which opens into the nave. When entering, my eyes were struck by a railing I had never noticed before, and which separated the nave from the

side aisles bounding the chancel. The doors of this railing were closed, so that I could not have entered by them from the aisles.—In the moment when I saw this railing, I was seized with giddiness, like a man who falls down in a fit; and this giddiness was followed by a sensation of overwhelming bodily exhaustion, such as I never remember to have experienced. The whole appearance of the church appeared to me changed. I tried, with an effort, to recognize where I was; and to establish the truth of what I saw. During the thirty-six years I had spent in Paris, I had often visited Nôtre-Dame; my impression had always been that the passage from the side aisles to the choir stood open and free. I had never remarked either railing or door—in so far as my recollections went. I was so much the more struck by this unforeseen obstacle that I had told no one of my project. In the first transport of disappointment, I saw heaven itself against me: and the cry of revolt that escaped me can only be understood by one who can put himself in my place; and only excused by the Reader of the secrets of all hearts. I left the church in haste, resolved never to return there. All day long I wandered in the streets, full of agitation; not knowing where I went; until, worn out, lassitude and the night forced me to return home, stupefied by grief."

It was in this hour, when the bewilderment and cruelty of the impressions made upon him by external things seemed actually to threaten his sanity, that the unaltered mind in the philosopher, "whose work it was more than that of any other one man that France arose from deadly decay and found irresistible energy," discovered within itself the same energy to resist decay, and to effect the miracle of self-recovery.

"But these last experiences," he wrote, "that seemed destined to seal my despair, produced, upon reflection, a revolution in me. By convincing me that my destiny was without remedy, they taught me not to combat the irrevocable. A passage from *Emile* which I recollected,

made me enter into myself, and find within me the consolation I had sought for outside. What evil, I asked myself, has this plot done thee? What has it taken from thee? Which of thy members has it mutilated? What crime has it made thee commit? So long as men have not power to tear from thy breast the heart that beats there, and to replace it by the heart of a dishonest man, how can they alter or deteriorate thy nature? Let them fashion to their pleasure a Jean Jacques of their own invention; the true Rousseau will remain what he is, in spite of them.

"What! have I then known the vanity of opinions, only to put myself beneath their yoke, at the expense of my peace of mind and tranquillity of heart? If men are pleased to see me other than I am, what matter? the essence of my being is not derived from the views they take of me. If they deceive and mislead future generations into accepting these false views, again—what matter? I shall no longer be there as the victim of their error. If they pervert and poison all that my desire to serve them has made me say and write, the injury is to themselves, and not to me.

". . . But it is even more unworthy that I should let myself be affected by their outrages, to the point of falling into grief and almost into despair. As though it lay within the power of men to change the nature of things, and to rob me of the consolations of which none can deprive the innocent. And why, then, should it be necessary to my happiness that men should think well of me? When death has withdrawn me from their hands, shall I trouble myself to know what is passing in connection with myself upon the earth? When the door of eternity opens for me, if what lies behind me survive in my recollection, if the existence of the human race still is present to me, my own sufferings and the injustices I have borne, will have become as though they had never existed.

"I have, then, chosen my part. Detached from earthly

ties and from the insensate judgments of men, I resign myself to being disfigured by them. My happiness has passed out of their hands: it is no longer in their power to prevent it, nor to understand it. Destined to be in this life the prey of error and falsehood, I wait for the hour of my deliverance and the triumph of truth, without seeking for it amongst mortal men. Delivered from this anxiety, I do not see by what methods they can ever again trouble my soul's peace.

"Hope extinguished stifles desire, but does not wipe out a duty: and I will, until the end, fulfil mine towards my fellow men. Henceforth I am dispensed from vain efforts to make them recognize the truth which they reject; but I am not dispensed from the duty of throwing it open to them, if they will return to it; and here is the only use I intend to make of this work. . . . If I find a depositary whom I can reasonably trust with it, I shall do this; although realizing that my work will probably not survive me. If I find no depositary, which is likely enough, I shall continue to keep it in my own hands until my death, unless my persecutors seize it before then. The fate of my papers, which I foresee, does not alarm me. Let men do as they please: the will of Heaven will do its work also. I do not know in what time, nor by what means, nor by whose hand. All I know is, that the supreme arbitrator is powerful and just, that my soul is innocent, and that I have not deserved my fate. This suffices me. To yield myself henceforth to my destiny, not to resist obstinately or combat it; to let my persecutors treat their victim as they please: to remain during the sad days of my old age their plaything; to abandon to them, to do as they please with them, my reputation and my fame, without letting my true self be affected by what others think—here is my last resolution. Let men henceforth do what they please—I have done what I ought. They may torment my life: but, in spite of them, I shall die in peace."

Here, then, is a last rectification that needs to be made

in the history of Rousseau related by writers who neglect the evidence of the *Dialogues* as a work that "cannot possibly have been written by a man in his right mind."

The summing up of the last chapter of this history in the contemptuous sentence: "A dense cloud of obscure misery hangs over the last months of this forlorn existence. No tragedy had ever a fifth act so squalid," is not only unsatisfactory; it would be unintelligible in a critic susceptible to noble impressions, did we not know that the writer has voluntarily rejected the evidence needed to illumine the obscurity of the scene. Let the tragedy of Rousseau's last years be admitted:—no tragedy ever had a fifth act more pathetic, nor, at the same time, more noble and inspiring.

Rousseau died suddenly at Ermenonville on July 2nd, 1778. His death was certified to be natural, the result of an apoplectic seizure, by the surgeons called in by his host the Count de Girardin.[1] That in the epoch before his death he was tranquil and at peace, the Count and his family testified. Nevertheless, in the month of his death the editor of the *Literary Correspondence* circulated the story that Rousseau had committed suicide.

"A suspicion has haunted the world ever since," wrote Mr. Morley in 1886, "that he destroyed himself by a pistol-shot."

That suspicion was dismissed once and for ever in 1897, when the solid wooden coffin encased in lead, which the Count de Girardin had ordered should hold his remains, was opened at the Panthéon, in the presence of men of letters and of science come to verify this question; and when the skull that had held the brain of Jean Jacques Rousseau was found to be uninjured and intact. But if the *Dialogues* had not been left unread, the suspicion could not have survived until then. Two years and five months before his death, "on February 24th, 1776, at about two o'clock, in the

[1] See Note B, Appendix, vol. i.

cathedral of Nôtre-Dame," Jean Jacques Rousseau, assailed by delusions, overwhelmed by misery, had been led by the spirit along the same path of deliverance, and to the same goal, the "noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow" reached four hundred years before the birth of Christ by an Eastern sage:—

"This, then, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow. Though it was not amongst the doctrines handed down, there arose within me the eye; there arose the knowledge; there arose the wisdom; there arose the light. And now this knowledge and insight have arisen within me—immovable is the emancipation of my heart."

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

NOTE F

THE FALSE LETTER OF DIDEROT

"Confirmation of the certainty of this first act of treachery by Diderot is found in the Arsenal MS." — Vol. ii. p. 13.

Cahier 159 in the Arsenal MS. contains a letter from Garnier, which is the reproduction of Diderot's letter in the *Correspondance Littéraire*, 2nd July 1756.— Vol. i. pp. 300–310.

The Arsenal cahier 159 is an old one, and pages have been torn away; it commences in the middle of a sentence of which the commencement is missing. The letter is introduced by an explanation (in No. 2 handwriting) supposed to be given by Madame de Montbrillant to her guardian.

"Voici une lettre que M. Volx m'a confiée, et que je lui ai demandé permission de vous communiquer. Elle est de son ami Garnier, et voici le sujet. Un nommé *Verret*, homme sans aveu, tombé du ciel, mourant de faim, fut un jour rencontré dans un café par Garnier. Ce Verret avait de l'esprit, de l'éloquence, et cherchait à en faire usage pour se procurer du pain. Il a essuyé des malheurs inouis, qui lui ont aigri le caractère: mais comme il y a un terme à tout, le hasard lui fit rencontrer le même jour Garnier et Desbarres. Tous deux le prirent en commisération; et se chargèrent de lui donner entre eux deux une somme annuelle suffisante pour le faire vivre, et l'encourager à se procurer par son travail une subsistance plus opulente—Cet homme s'est retiré dans une petite ville de province; d'où il

accable ces messieurs de lettres et d' importunités. Ils ont pris le parti de ne lui plus répondre. Mais la dernière lettre, adressée à M. Garnier était telle qu'il n'a pu la passer en silence. Voici donc ce qu'il lui a répondu. Cette lettre vous fera juger de l'esprit et du cœur de Garnier ; et vous prouvera que si je m'étais pressée de le mal juger je serais bien obligée de m'en repentir. Quant à Desbarres, vous verrez qu'il joue un beau rôle dans cette lettre ; mais mon expérience ne me permet pas d'en mieux penser pour cela. Est ce l'exemple de Garnier, est-ce de son propre mouvement, qu'il s'est trouvé si généreux ; c'est ce que je ne sais pas. Mais quel est le méchant qui n'a pas un bon moment à se rappeler dans sa vie? Il serait aussi rare que l'homme de bien qui n'aurait jamais failli ! Or écoutez et jugez des principes de notre ami Garnier."

The "principles" of Garnier, and the offensive tone of contempt employed towards the protégé who has to accept, with the benefits flung at him, his benefactor's friendly assurances that he is "ferocious," "bitter," restless, melancholy, a vagabond, a feeble creature whose despicable weakness necessarily exposes him to ill treatment, give us over again the "little masterpiece" which Grimm sent round to his royal patrons a few months after Rousseau had left Paris and settled himself in his retreat at Montmorency. . . . But this attempt of the falsifiers of Madame d'Epinay to cover their earlier imposture in the *Correspondance Littéraire* by introducing into the altered story of René "*l'homme sous aveu*," "*un nommé Verret*," *qui avait essuyé les malheurs qui lui ont aigri le caractère*, who (as well as René) was treated to home-truths by his benefactor, Garnier, *never got beyond the* 159*th cahier, afterwards rejected when the revised work came to be re-copied.* For either the conspirators themselves recognized, or else Madame d'Epinay, with her critical tact and sense of fitness, made them feel that this second phantom-René cast a shadow of doubt upon the substantial character of the

original René ; and that it was too much to ask from the readers that they should believe the generous and impulsive Garnier afflicted at one and the same time with *two* protégés, both of whom had been soured by misfortune, both of whom became "ferocious" as a result of leading a retired life ; both of whom were afflicted with the mania of suspicion and the inordinate morbid vanity of imagining the whole earth in league against them ; both of whom compelled him to smite them with contemptuous insult, and reprove them, at the very moment when he was conferring pecuniary benefits on them. But if "*l'homme sous aveu*" Verret died before he came to birth as a personage in Madame d'Epinay's revised novel, he was left, forgotten,—a phantom justificator and avenger, who waited, in the old rejected Arsenal cahier, (who had waited there more than a hundred years, when these torn and faded pages came into my hand), to testify, when at length the day of reckoning came round, to this undiscovered fraud ; and to unmask the impostors.

NOTE G

ROUSSEAU'S ALLEGED SUPPORT OF THE JESUITS— LIBEL OF FALSE LETTER

"I wouldn't swear that he doesn't side with the Jesuits, and undertake their apology" (vol. ii. p. 26).

"*As after placing the Jesuits at the head of the dangerous orders of monks he was on the point of taking their defence when the civil authorities banished them and the ecclesiastical authorities expelled them from amongst religious associations.*" (Diderot's note added on to his *Essay upon Seneca.*) See page 58.

There was evidently a design agreed upon amongst the conspirators to make it appear that Rousseau (through the desire of taking up a different attitude to other people, and of exciting surprise) passed as a

defender of the Jesuits. Thus we have (see vol. ii. page 26) the remarkable prophecy of that simple woman of unusual tact and penetration, "Garnier's wife":—"*Some day you will find him commit a great crime rather than remain unknown. I wouldn't swear that he doesn't side with the Jesuits, and undertake their apology.*" In 1764, when Rousseau was a refugee under Frederic's protection at Motiers, an effort was made to prove that this prophecy was in its own way as correct as the other prophecy, that the habitation of woods would certainly pervert Jean Jacques' morals, disturb his reason, and render him guilty of crimes. In 1763 had appeared Rousseau's fine letter to Christophe de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris. Grimm, in his secret journal, circulated the report that in this eloquent protest against sheltering human pride, intolerance, and cruelty behind the divine name and the professed love of God, Rousseau had justified the persecution of the Protestants in France (see p. 126). In March 1764 a false letter was circulated, under the title, "*Jean Jacques Rousseau, citoyen de Genève, à Jean-François de Montillet, archevèque et seigneur d'Auch*—where, upon the model of the *Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont*, Rousseau was made to call another archbishop to account because, in a pastoral letter chiefly directed against Voltaire and the Encyclopædists, "the author of *Emile*" came in for his share of the blame Monseigneur de Montillet had pronounced against the philosophers of the period. The *Lettre à l'Archevèque d'Auch* was not a successful libel. To arrive at a convincing imitation of Rousseau's eloquence when defending great principles was less easy than to write an amorous epistle that might seem, to inattentive readers of the *Confessions*, brought home to the same author by the reproduction of some of his familiar expressions and striking images when describing a scene presented under an altered aspect. Nevertheless, this fraudulent "Letter" represents, in so far as its merits as a very creditable literary

performance are concerned, a scheme which testifies to the trouble it was esteemed worth while to take with the purpose of building up Rousseau's reputation as the master-sophist of the period. In this letter we have this master-sophist out-jesuiting the Jesuits by maintaining that they are perfectly justified in their character of French subjects in acquiescing in his condemnation of their institutions as harmful to the interests of the state—but that on the other hand they are justified, as subjects of a spiritual rule where the control of the state does not enter, in continuing obedient members of their order.

" C'est donc gratuitement et contre l'intérêt même de vos protégés que vous nous[1] déchirez dans votre lettre pastorale," writes the author of the letter to Jean de Montillet. " Vous vous attendez peut-être à quelque vengeance éclatante de ma part : mais je ne suis point prêtre et je sais pardonner. Je sais plus, car c'est pour vous, c'est pour vos amis que je prends aujourd'hui la plume. Ma générosité vous étonne, Monseigneur ; un Protestant voler au sécours des Jésuites ; Jean Jacques Rousseau faire cause commune avec Christophe de Beaumont et Jean François de Montillet : ce trait de bizarrerie manquait à mon histoire ; mais après tout, je n'ai pas plus à me louer que vous de la mauvaise humeur des Parlemens ; et ce serait, je l' avoue, un grand plaisir pour moi de leur donner quelque mortification.

" Ne croyez pas toutefois que ce soit en prenant la défense de l'Institut des Jésuites que je prétende me venger des Tribunaux qui l'ont proscrit. Que vous êtes bon de fournir ainsi des armes à vos ennemis ! Jean Jacques Rousseau va prendre une route toute opposée à la vôtre. Loin de critiquer hors de saison les arrêts des Parlements je veux au contraire prouver qu'ils sont justes, qu'il n'y a pas le sens commune dans tout ce qu'on dit jusqu'ici pour la défense des Jésuites—

[1] " Nous " signifies the " philosophes."

qu'ils ont tort de se croire liés par leurs vœux ; et qu'ils peuvent consentir sans scrupule au serment qu'on veut leur arracher. Par là je les enchaîne dans le Royaume : et je me venge à coup sur des Parlements etc."

Different correspondents of Rousseau, amongst others Madame de Chenonceau, wrote to him about this letter. On the 27th May 1764 it was sent him, and we have in his published correspondence the following letter, where we have his denial that he had ever written to this archbishop, or ever heard of his pastoral letter to which this was the alleged reply.

A M. ——

"Motiers, le 28 mai 1764.

"C'est rendre un vrai service à un solitaire éloigné de tout, que de l'avertir de ce qui se passe par rapport à lui. Voilà, monsieur, ce que vous avez très-obligeamment fait en m'envoyant un exemplaire de ma prétendue lettre à M. l'archevêque d'Auch.

"Cette lettre, comme vous l'avez deviné, n'est pas plus de moi que tous ces écrits pseudonymes qui courent Paris sous mon nom. Je n'ai point vu le mandement auquel elle répond, je n'en ai même jamais ouï parler, et il y a huit jours que j'ignorois quil y eût un M. du Tillet au monde. J'ai peine à croire que l'auteur de cette lettre ait voulu persuader sérieusement qu'elle étoit de moi. N'ai-je pas assez des affaires qu'on me suscite sans m'aller mêler de celles d'autrui ? Depuis quand m'a-t-on vu devenir homme de parti ? Quel nouvel intérêt m'auroit fait changer si brusquement de maximes ? Les Jésuites sont-ils en meilleur état que quand je refusois d'écrire contre eux dans leurs disgrâces ? Quelqu'un me connoît-il assez lâche, assez vil pour insulter aux malheureux ? Eh ! si j'oubliois les égards qui leur sont dus, de qui pourroient ils en attendre ? Que m'importe enfin le sort des Jésuites, quel qu'il puisse

être ? Leurs ennemis se sont-ils montrés pour moi plus tolérants qu'eux ? La triste vérité délaissée est-elle plus chère aux uns qu'aux autres ? et, soit qu'ils triomphent ou qu'ils succombent, en serai-je moins persécuté ? D'ailleurs, pour peu qu'on lise attentivement cette lettre, qui ne sentira pas comme vous que je n'en suis point l'auteur ? Les maladresses y sont entassés : elle est datée de Neufchâtel où je n'ai pas mis le pied ; on y emploie la formule du *très-humble serviteur*, dont je n'use avec personne ; on m'y fait prendre le titre de citoyen de Genève auquel j'ai renoncé : tout en commençant on s'échauffe pour M. de Voltaire, le plus ardent, le plus adroit de mes persécuteurs, et qui se passe bien, je crois, d'un défenseur tel que moi ; on affecte quelques imitations de mes phrases, et ces imitations se démentent l'instant après : le style de la lettre peut être meilleur que le mien ; mais enfin ce n'est pas le mien : on m'y prête des expressions basses ; on m'y fait dire des grossièretés qu'on ne trouvera certainement dans aucun de mes écrits : on m'y fait dire *vous* à Dieu ; usage que je ne blâme pas, mais qui n'est pas le nôtre. Pour me supposer l'auteur de cette lettre, il faut supposer aussi que j'ai voulu me déguiser. Il n'y falloit donc pas mettre mon nom, et alors on auroit pu persuader aux sots qu'elle étoit de moi.

" Telles sont, monsieur, les armes dignes de mes adversaires dont ils achèvent de m'accabler. Non contents de m'outrager dans mes ouvrages, ils prennent le parti plus cruel encore de m'attribuer les leurs. A la vérité le public jusqu'ici n'a pas pris le change, et il faudroit qu'il fût bien aveuglé pour le prendre aujourd'hui. La justice que j'en attends sur ce point est une consolation bien foible pour tant de maux. Vous savez la nouvelle affliction qui m'accable : la perte de M. de Luxembourg met le comble à toutes les autres ; je la sentirai jusqu'au tombeau. Il fut mon consolateur durant sa vie, il sera mon protecteur après sa mort : sa chère et honorable mémoire défendra la mienne des

insultes de mes ennemis, et quand ils voudront la souiller par leurs calomnies, on leur dira : Comment cela pourroit-il être ? le plus honnête homme de France fut son ami.

"Je vous remercie et vous salue, monsieur, de tout mon cœur."

NOTE GG

HIS ALLEGED PROCLAMATION THAT HE WAS UNGRATEFUL —LETTRE A MALESHERBES

"What he wrote to M. de Malesherbes, he has said to me twenty times : "I feel my heart is ungrateful. I hate benefactors, because a benefit demands gratitude, that gratitude is a duty, and that a duty is insupportable to me."—*Diderot, in the note to his Essay upon Seneca.*

By force of repetition it has come to be accepted as an unquestionable fact, that Rousseau proclaimed himself ungrateful, and boasted that a duty, in that it was a duty, was hateful to him. If what he really wrote be read with ordinary intelligence, and some attention to the circumstances which led him to explain to Malesherbes both the true reasons for his abandonment of Paris and the effect produced upon him by a country life, it becomes clear that it is only by a voluntary perversion of the true sense of his words that Diderot contrives to make him admit that he is ungrateful, when what he really says is that his heart rebels against the effort to compel him to sacrifice his time and freedom for people who force their benefits upon him and then demand gratitude from him as a duty. Rousseau, writing to Malesherbes in 1761, was still smarting under the reproof of ingratitude towards the insulting Diderot, who called him "ferocious and wicked" because he preferred to live in the country ; towards the traitor and calumniator Grimm, who called him an impostor and a lunatic ; and towards the fickle Madame d'Epinay, who

had indeed built him his hermitage and won him by this kindness to trust her friendship, but who had turned him out of his retreat in mid-winter, and given his enemies the opportunity of taunting him with her "benefits." He was also defending himself against the accusation of being a vain and morbid hunter after notoriety who had buried himself in the country to make himself the talk of Paris.

"J'ai un cœur trop sensible à d'autres attachemens," he wrote, "pour l'être si fort à l'opinion publique ; j'aime trop mon plaisir et mon indépendance pour être esclave de la vanité au point qu'ils le supposent. Celui pour qui la fortune et l'espoir de parvenir ne balança jamais un rendez-vous ou un souper agréable ne doit pas naturellement sacrifier son bonheur au désir de faire parler de lui ; et il n'est point du tout croyable qu'un homme qui se sent quelque talent, et qui tarde jusqu'à quarante ans à le faire connoître, soit assez fou pour aller s'ennuyer le reste de ses jour dans un désert, uniquement pour acquérir la réputation d'un misanthrope.

* * * * *

"Quelle est donc enfin cette cause ? Elle n'est autre que cet indomptable esprit de liberté que rien n'a pu vaincre, et devant lequel les honneurs, la fortune, et la réputation même, ne me sont rien. Il est certain que cet esprit de liberté me vient moins d'orgueil que de paresse ; mais cette paresse est incroyable : tout l'effarouche ; les moindres devoirs de la vie civile lui sont insupportables ; un mot à dire, une lettre à écrire, une visite à faire, dès qu'il le faut, sont pour moi des supplices. Voilà pourquoi, quoique le commerce ordinaire des hommes me soit odieux, l'intime amitié m'est si chère, parce qu'il n'y a plus de devoir pour elle ; on suit son cœur, et tout est fait. *Voilà encore pourquoi j'ai toujours tant redouté les bienfaits ; car tout bienfait exige reconnoissance, et je me sens le cœur ingrat,*

par cela seul que la reconnoissance est un devoir. En un mot, l'espèce de bonheur qu'il me faut n'est pas tant de faire ce que je veux, que de ne pas faire ce que je ne veux pas. La vie active n'a rien qui me tente ; je consentirois cent fois plutôt à ne jamais rien faire qu'a faire quelque chose malgré moi ; et j'ai cent fois pensé que je n'aurois pas vécu trop malheureux à la Bastille, n'y étant tenu à rien du tout qu'à rester là.

* * * * *

"Après vous avoir exposé, monsieur, les vrais motifs de ma conduite, je voudrois vous parler de mon état moral dans ma retraite. Mais je sens qu'il est bien tard ; mon âme aliénée d'elle-même est toute à mon corps : le délabrement de ma pauvre machine l'y tient de jour en jour plus attachée, et jusqu'à ce qu'elle s'en sépare enfin tout à coup. C'est de mon bonheur que je voudrois vous parler, et l'on parle mal du bonheur quand on souffre.

"Mes maux sont l'ouvrage de la nature, mais mon bonheur est le mien. Quoi qu'on en puisse dire, j'ai été sage, puisque j'ai été heureux autant que ma nature m'a permis de l'être : je n'ai point été chercher ma félicité au loin, je l'ai cherchée auprès de moi, et l'y ai trouvée. Spartin dit que Similis, courtisan de Trajan, ayant sans mécontentement personnel quitté la cour et tous ses emplois pour aller vivre paisiblement à la campagne, fit mettre ces mots sur sa tombe : *J'ai demeuré soixante-seize ans sur la terre, et j'en ai vécu sept.* Voilà ce que je puis dire à quelque égard, quoique mon sacrifice ait été moindre : je n'ai commencé de vivre que le 9 avril 1756.

"Je ne saurois vous dire, monsieur, combien j'ai été touché de voir que vous m'estimiez le plus malheureux des hommes. Le public sans doute en jugera comme vous, et c'est encore ce qui m'afflige. Oh ! que le sort dont j'ai joui n'est-il connu de tout l'univers ! chacun voudroit s'en faire un semblable ; la paix régneroit sur la terre ; les hommes ne songeroient plus à se nuire, et il

n'y auroit plus de méchans quand nul n'auroit intérêt à l'être. Mais de quoi jouissois-je enfin quand j'étois seul ? De moi, de l'univers entier, de tout ce qui est, de tout ce qui peut être, de tout ce qu'a de beau le monde sensible, et d'imaginable le monde intellectuel : je rassemblois autour de moi tout ce qui pouvoit flatter mon cœur ; mes désirs étoient la mesure de mes plaisirs. Non, jamais les plus voluptueux n'ont connu de pareilles délices, et j'ai cent fois plus joui de mes chimères qu'ils ne font des réalités.

" Quand mes douleurs me font tristement mesurer la longueur des nuits, et que l'agitation de la fièvre m'empêche de goûter un seul instant de sommeil, souvent je me distrais de mon état présent, en songeant aux divers évènemens de ma vie ; et les repentirs, les doux souvenirs, les regrets, l'attendrissement, se partagent le soin de me faire oublier quelques momens mes souffrances. Quels temps croiriez-vous, monsieur, que je me rappelle le plus souvent et le plus volontiers dans mes rêves ? Ce ne sont point les plaisirs de ma jeunesse ; ils furent trop rares, trop mêlés d'amertume, et sont déjà trop loin de moi. Ce sont ceux de ma retraite ; ce sont mes promenades solitaires, ce sont ces jours rapides, mais délicieux, que j'ai passés tout entiers avec moi seul, avec ma bonne et simple gouvernante, avec mon chien bien-aimé, ma vieille chatte, avec les oiseaux de la campagne et les biches de la forêt, avec la nature entière et son inconcevable auteur. En me levant avant le soleil pour aller voir, contempler son lever dans mon jardin ; quand je voyois commencer une belle journée, mon premier souhait étoit que ni lettres, ni visites, n'en vinssent troubler le charme. Après avoir donné la matinée à divers soins que je remplissois tous avec plaisir, parce que je pouvois les remettre à un autre temps, je me hâtois de dîner pour échapper aux importuns, et me ménager un plus long après-midi. Avant une heure, même les jours les plus ardens, je partois par le grand soleil avec le fidèle Achate, pressant le pas dans la crainte

que quelqu'un ne vînt s'emparer de moi avant que j'eusse pu m'esquiver; mais quand une fois j'avois pu doubler un certain coin, avec quel battement de cœur, avec quelle petillement de joie je commençois à respirer en me sentant sauvé, en me disant: 'Me voilà maître de moi pour le reste de ce jour!' J'allois alors d'un pas plus tranquille chercher quelque lieu sauvage dans la forêt, quelque lieu désert ou rien ne montrant la main des hommes n'annonçât la servitude et la domination, quelque asile où je pusse croire avoir pénétré le premier, et où nul tiers importun ne vînt s'interposer entre la nature et moi. C'étoit là qu'elle sembloit déployer à mes yeux une magnificence toujours nouvelle. L'or des genêts et la pourpre des bruyères frappoient mes yeux d'un luxe qui touchoit mon cœur; la majesté des arbres qui me couvroient de leur ombre, la délicatesse des arbustes qui m'environnoient, l'étonnante variété des herbes et des fleurs que je foulois sous mes pieds, tenoient mon esprit dans une alternative continuelle d'observation et d'admiration: le concours de tant d'objets intéressans qui se disputoient mon attention, m'attirant sans cesse de l'un à l'autre, favorisoit mon humeur rêveuse et paresseuse, et me faisoit souvent redire en moi-même: 'Non, Salomon dans toute sa gloire ne fut jamais vêtu comme l'un d'eux.'

"Mon imagination ne laissoit pas longtemps déserte la terre ainsi parée. Je la peuplois bientôt d'êtres selon mon cœur, et, chassant bien loin l'opinion, les préjugés, toutes les passions factices, je transportois dans les asiles de la nature des hommes dignes de les habiter. Je m'en formois une société charmante dont je ne me sentois pas indigne, je me faisois un siècle d'or à ma fantaisie, et remplissant ces beaux jours de toutes les scènes de ma vie qui m'avoient laissé de doux souvenirs, et de toutes celles que mon cœur pouvoit désirer encore, je m'attendrissois jusqu'aux larmes sur les vrais plaisirs de l'humanité, plaisirs si délicieux, si purs, et qui sont désormais si loin des hommes. Oh! si dans ces momens,

quelque idée de Paris, de mon siècle, et de ma petite gloriole d'auteur, venoit troubler mes rêveries, avec quel dédain je la chassois à l'instant pour me livrer, sans distraction, aux sentimens exquis dont mon âme étoit pleine! Cependant au milieu de tout cela, je l'avoue, le néant de mes chimères venoit quelquefois la contrister tout à coup. Quand tous mes rêves se seroient tournés en réalités, ils ne m'auroient pas suffi; j'aurois imaginé, rêvé, désiré encore. Je trouvois en moi un vide inexplicable que rien n'auroit pu remplir, un certain élancement de cœur vers une autre sorte de jouissance dont je n'avois pas d'idée, et dont pourtant je sentois le besoin. Hé bien, monsieur, cela même étoit jouissance, puisque j'en étois pénétré d'un sentiment très-vif, et d'une tristesse attirante, que je n'aurois pas voulu ne pas avoir.

"Bientôt de la surface de la terre j'élevois mes idées à tous les êtres de la nature, au système universel des choses, à l'être incompréhensible qui embrasse tout. Alors, l'esprit perdu dans cette immensité, je ne pensois pas, je ne raisonnois pas, je ne philosophois pas, je me sentois, avec une sorte de volupté, accablé du poids de cet univers, je me livrois avec ravissement à la confusion de ces grandes idées, j'aimois à me perdre en imagination dans l'espace, mon cœur resserré dans les bornes des êtres s'y trouvoit trop à l'étroit! j'étouffois dans l'univers; j'aurois voulu m'élancer dans l'infini. Je crois que, si j'eusse dévoilé tous les mystères de la nature, je me serois senti dans une situation moins délicieuse que cette étourdissante extase à laquelle mon esprit se livroit sans retenue, et qui, dans l'agitation de mes transports, me faisoit écrier quelquefois: 'O grand Etre! ô grand Etre!' sans pouvoir dire ni penser rien de plus.[1]

[1] Compare:—"And he, (*i.e.* the wise man,) lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of love, pity, and equanimity; and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue

"Ainsi s'écouloient dans un délire continuel les journées les plus charmantes que jamais créature humaine ait passées : et quand le coucher du soleil me faisoit songer à la retraite, étonné de la rapidité du temps, je croyois n'avoir pas assez mis à profit ma journée, je pensois en pouvoir jouir davantage encore : et, pour réparer le temps perdu, je me disois : 'Je reviendrai demain.'

"Je revenois à petits pas, la tête un peu fatiguée, mais le cœur content ; je me reposois agréablement au retour, en me livrant à l'impression des objets, mais sans penser, sans imaginer, sans rien faire autre chose que sentir le calme et le bonheur de ma situation. Je trouvois mon couvert mis sur ma terrasse. Je soupois de grand appétit dans mon petit domestique ; nulle image de servitude et de dépendance ne troubloit la bienveillance qui nous unissoit tous. Mon chien lui-même étoit mon ami, non mon esclave ; nous avions toujours la même volonté, mais jamais il ne m'a obéi. Ma gaieté durant toute la soirée témoignoit que j'avois vécu seul tout le jour ; j'étois bien différent quand j'avois vu de la compagnie : j'étois rarement content des autres, et jamais de moi. Le soir, j'étois grondeur et taciturne : cette remarque est de ma gouvernante, et, depuis qu'elle me l'a dite, je l'ai toujours trouvée juste en m'observant. Enfin, après avoir fait encore quelques tours dans mon jardin, ou chanté quelque air sur mon épinette, je trouvois dans mon lit un repos de corps et d'âme cent fois plus doux que le sommeil même.

"Ce sont là les jours qui ont fait le vrai bonheur de ma vie, bonheur sans amertume, sans ennuis, sans regrets, et auquel j'aurois borné volontiers tout celui

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to pervade with heart of love, pity, and equanimity, far reaching, grown great, and beyond measure. Just as a mighty trumpeter makes himself heard, and that without difficulty, in all the four directions, even so of all things that have shape or life there is not one that he passes by, or leaves aside, but regards them all with mind set free, and deep felt love."—*Buddhist Sutta*, vol. xi., *Sacred Book of the East*, p. 201.

de mon existence. Oui, monsieur, que de pareils jours remplissent pour moi l'éternité, je n'en demande point d'autres, et n'imagine pas que je sois beaucoup moins heureux dans ces ravissantes contemplations que les intelligences célestes. Mais un corps qui souffre ôte à l'esprit sa liberté ; désormais je ne suis plus seul, j'ai un hôte qui m'importune, il faut m'en délivrer pour être à moi ; et l'essai que j'ai fait de ces douces jouissances ne sert plus qu'à me faire attendre avec moins d'effroi le moment de les goûter sans distraction.

"Mais me voici déjà à la fin de ma seconde feuille. Il m'en faudroit pourtant encore une. Encore une lettre donc, et puis plus. Pardon, monsieur ; quoique j'aime trop à parler de moi, je n'aime pas à en parler avec tout le monde : c'est ce qui me fait abuser de l'occasion quand je l'ai et qu'elle me plaît. Voilà mon tort et mon excuse. Je vous prie de la prendre en gré."

A M. DE MALESHERBES

"28 janvier 1762.

"Je vous ai montré, monsieur, dans le secret de mon cœur, les vrais motifs de ma retraite et de toute ma conduite ; motifs bien moins nobles sans doute que vous ne les avez supposés, mais tels pourtant qu'ils me rendent content de moi-même, et m'inspirent la fierté d'âme d'un homme qui se sent bien ordonné, et qui, ayant eu le courage de faire ce qu'il falloit pour l'être, croit pouvoir s'en imputer le mérite. Il dépendoit de moi non de me faire un autre tempérament, ni un autre caractère, mais de tirer parti du mien, pour me rendre bon à moi-même, et nullement méchant aux autres. C'est beaucoup que cela monsieur, et peu d'hommes en peuvent dire autant. Aussi je ne vous déguiserai point que, malgré le sentiment de mes vices, j'ai pour moi une haute estime.

"Vos gens de lettres ont beau crier qu'un homme seul est inutile à tout le monde, et ne remplit pas ses devoirs

dans la société ; j'estime, moi, les paysans de Montmorency des membres plus utiles de la société que tous ces tas de désœuvrés payés de la graisse du peuple pour aller six fois la semaine bavarder dans une académie ; et je suis plus content de pouvoir, dans l'occasion, faire quelque plaisir à mes pauvres voisins que d'aider à parvenir à ces foules de petits intrigans dont Paris est plein, qui tous aspirent à l'honneur d'être des fripons en place, et que, pour le bien public, ainsi que pour le leur, on devroit tous renvoyer labourer la terre dans leurs provinces. C'est quelque chose que de donner aux hommes l'example de la vie qu'ils devroient tous mener ; c'est quelque chose, quand on n'a plus ni force ni santé pour travailler de ses bras d'oser, de sa retraite, faire entendre la voix de la vérité ; c'est quelque chose d'avertir les hommes de la folie des opinions qui les rendent misérables ; c'est quelque chose d'avoir pu contribuer à empêcher, ou différer au moins dans ma patrie l'établissement pernicieux que, pour faire sa cour à Voltaire à nos dépens, d'Alembert vouloit qu'on fît parmi nous. Si j'eusse vécu dans Genève, je n'aurois pu ni publier l'épître dédicatoire du *Discours sur l'inégalité,* ni parler même de l'établissement de la comédie, du ton que je l'ai fait. Je serois beaucoup plus inutile à mes compatriotes, vivant au milieu d'eux, que je ne puis l'être, dans l'occasion, de ma retraite. Qu'importe en quel lieu j'habite, si j'agis où je dois agir ? D'ailleurs les habitans de Montmorency sont-ils moins hommes que les Parisiens ? et, quand je puis en dissuader quelqu'un d'envoyer son enfant se corrompre à la ville, fais-je moins de bien que si je pouvois de la ville le renvoyer au foyer paternel ? Mon indigence seule ne m'empêcheroit-elle pas d'être inutile de la manière que tous ces beaux parleurs l'entendent ? Et, puisque je ne mange du pain qu'autant que j'en gagne, ne suis-je pas forcé de travailler pour ma subsistance, et de payer à la société tout le besoin que je puis avoir d'elle ? Il est vrai que je me suis refusé aux occupations

qui ne m'étoient pas propres; ne me sentant point le talent qui pouvoit me faire mériter le bien que vous m'avez voulu faire, l'accepter eût été le voler à quelque homme de lettres aussi indigent que moi, et plus capable de ce travail-là;[1] en me l'offrant vous supposiez que j'étois en état de faire un extrait, que je pouvois m'occuper de matières qui m'étoient indifférentes; et, cela n'étant pas, je vous aurois trompé, je me serois rendu indigne de vos bontés en me conduisant autrement que je n'ai fait; on n'est jamais excusable de faire mal ce qu'on fait volontairement: je serois maintenant mécontent de moi, et vous aussi; et je ne goûterois pas le plaisir que je prends à vous écrire. Enfin, tant que mes forces me l'ont permis, en travaillant pour moi, j'ai fait, selon ma portée, tout ce que j'ai pu pour la société; si j'ai peu fait pour elle, j'en ai encore moins exigé; et je me crois si bien quitte avec elle dans l'état où je suis, que, si je pouvois désormais me reposer tout à fait, et vivre pour moi seul, je le ferois sans scrupule. J'écarterai du moins de moi, de toutes mes forces, l'importunité du bruit public. Quand je vivrois encore cent ans, je n'écrirois pas une ligne pour la presse, et ne croirois vraiment recommencer à vivre que quand je serois tout à fait oublié."

NOTE H

DIGNIFIED LETTER TO MADAME D'HOUDETOT—LETTRE A SOPHIE

"*Rousseau's reply to Madame d'Houdetot's insulting condescension is one of the fine acts of his life.*"—Vol. ii. p. 49.

[1] Malesherbes had offered Rousseau a post upon the *Journal des Savants* worth 800 francs a year: he had declined it for the same reason that he had refused to offer himself for the Librarianship at Geneva, and had renounced the place of accountant given him by de Francueil.

Here is this letter,[1] which may be usefully compared with a fictitious epistle attributed to the same writer :

A MADAME D'HOUDETOT

"Ce samedi 25 mars 1758.

"En attendant votre courrier, je commence par répondre à votre lettre de vendredi, venue par la poste.

"Je crois avoir à m'en plaindre, et j'ai peine à comprendre que vous l'ayez écrite avec l'intention que j'en fusse content. Expliquons-nous, et, si j'ai tort, dites-le moi sans détour.

"Vous me dites que j'ai été le plus grand obstacle aux progrès de votre amitié. D'abord j'ai à vous dire que je n'exigeois point que votre amitié fît du progrès, mais seulement qu'elle ne diminuât pas, et certainement je n'ai point été la cause de cette diminution. En nous séparant, à notre dernière entrevue d'Eaubonne, j'aurois juré que nous étions les deux personnes de l'univers qui avoient le plus d'estime et d'amitié l'une pour l'autre, et qui s'honoroient le plus réciproquement. C'est, ce me semble, avec les assurances de ce mutuel sentiment que nous nous séparâmes, et c'est encore sur ce même ton que vous m'écrivîtes quatre jours après. Insensiblement vos lettres ont changé de style ; vos témoignages d'amitié sont devenus plus réservés, plus circonspects, plus conditionnels ; au bout d'un mois, il s'est trouvé, je ne sais comment, que votre ami n'étoit plus votre ami. Je vous ai demandé plusieurs fois la raison de ce changement, et vous m'obligez de vous la demander encore : je ne vous demande pas pourquoi votre amitié n'a point augmenté, mais pourquoi elle s'est éteinte. Ne m'alléguez pas ma rupture avec votre belle-sœur et son digne ami. Vous savez ce qui s'est passé ; et, de tout temps, vous avez dû savoir qu'il ne sauroit y avoir de paix entre J. J. Rousseau et les méchans.

[1] *Correspondance de J. J. Rousseau*, Edition Hachette, vol. i. p. 185, letter 181.

" Vous me parlez de fautes, de foiblesses, d'un ton de reproche. Je suis foible, il est vrai ; ma vie est pleine de fautes, car je suis homme. Mais voici ce qui me distingue des hommes que je connois : c'est qu'au milieu de mes fautes je me les suis toujours reprochées ; c'est qu'elles ne m'ont jamais fait mépriser mon devoir, ni fouler aux pieds la vertu ; c'est qu'enfin j'ai combattu et vaincu pour elle, dans les momens où tous les autres l'oublient. Puissiez-vous ne trouver jamais que des hommes aussi criminels !

" Vous me dites que votre amitié, telle qu'elle est, subsistera toujours pour moi, tel que je sois, excepté le crime et l'indignité, dont vous ne me croirez jamais capable. A cela je vous réponds que j'ignore quel prix je dois donner à votre amitié, telle qu'elle est ; que, quant à moi, je serai toujours ce que je suis depuis quarante ans ; qu'on ne commence pas si tard à changer ; et quant au crime et à l'indignité, dont vous ne me croirez jamais capable, je vous apprends que ce compliment est dur pour un honnête homme, et insultant pour un ami.

" Vous me dites que vous m'avez toujours vu beaucoup meilleur que je ne me suis montré. D'autres, trompés par les apparences, m'estiment moins que je ne vaux, et sont excusables ; mais pour vous, vous devez me connoître : je ne vous demande que de me juger sur ce que vous avez vu de moi.[1]

" Mettez-vous un moment à ma place. Que voulez vous que je pense de vous et de vos lettres ? On diroit que vous avez peur que je ne sois paisible dans ma retraite, et que vous êtes bien aise de m'y donner, de temps en temps, des témoignages de peu d'estime, que, quoi que vous on puissiez dire, votre cœur démentira toujours. Rentrez en vous-même, je vous en conjure. Vous m'avez demandé quelquefois les sentimens d'un père :

[1] Is it possible that Rousseau, when writing this, knew that to the same woman towards whom he took this tone he had, a few months earlier, written : " *vois à quel point tu m'as avili !* " p. 271.

je les sens en vous parlant, même aujourd'hui que vous ne me les demandez plus. Je n'ai point changé d'opinion sur votre bon cœur ; mais je vois que vous ne savez plus ni penser, ni parler, ni agir par vous-même. Voyez au moins quel rôle on vous fait jouer. Imaginez ma situation. Pourquoi venez-vous contrister encore, par vos lettres, une âme que vous devez croire assez affligée de ses propres ennuis ? Est-il si nécessaire à votre repos de troubler le mien ? Ne sauriez-vous concevoir que j'ai plus besoin de consolations que de reproches ? Épargnez-moi donc ceux que vous savez que je ne mérite pas, et portez quelque respect à mes malheurs. Je vous demande de trois choses l'une : ou changez de style, ou justifiez le vôtre, ou cessez de m'écrire ; j'aime mieux renoncer à vos lettres que d'en recevoir d'injurieuses. Je puis me passer que vous m'estimiez ; mais j'ai besoin de vous estimer vous-même, et c'est ce que je ne saurois faire si vous manquez à votre ami.

" Quant à Julie, ne vous gênez point pour elle. Soit que vous m'écriviez ou non, vos copies ne se feront pas moins ; et, si je les ai suspendues après un silence de trois semaines, c'est que j'ai cru que, m'ayant tout à fait oublié, vous ne vous souciiez plus de rien qui vînt de moi. Adieu : je ne suis ni changeant ni subjugué comme vous ; l'amitié que vous m'avez demandée, et que je vous ai promise, je vous la garderai jusqu'au tombeau. Mais si vous continuez à m'écrire de ce ton équivoque et soupçonneux que vous affectez avec moi, trouvez bon que je cesse de vous répondre ; rien n'est moins regrettable qu'un commerce d'outrages : mon cœur et ma plume s'y refuseront toujours avec vous."

The assertions made by Rousseau about the mutual admiration and esteem which characterized their friendship, when Madame d'Houdetot and he bade each other farewell at Eaubonne, is corroborated by the lady's letter to him dated 26th October, 1757 (one of the

Neuchatel autographs). Unless we take the point of view that these two people were, in the private letters they exchanged, dishonest comedians, or crafty hypocrites who prepared documents to mislead others as to the true character of their relationships, is it possible to suppose that Rousseau could have had the audacity to tell Madame d'Houdetot that he would "have sworn that, in October, he and she were the two people in the universe who reciprocally honoured each other most," if in the preceding June he had taken advantage of her imprudence to render her inconstant to Saint-Lambert. Or can one believe that, if this shameful secret existed between them, Madame d'Houdetot, on her side, could have ventured, in her letter to Rousseau, to express herself thus:—

"After the object who you know rules my affections, *you* are the one who appears to me most worthy of friendship. My heart is satisfied with what it has received. With a lover like him, and a friend like you, it has nothing else to seek! I shall always remember, my dear citizen, that I heard from your own mouth this declaration: *that henceforth my love for him was one of my virtues. Never forget these words; they bind me to you with a new tie.*"

Nevertheless, were we compelled to accept as authentic a letter that since 1822 has found its way into Rousseau's correspondence, and which modern critics do not hesitate to quote as one addressed to him by Madame d'Houdetot in the very same epoch that he was meditating his much-talked of letter to Saint-Lambert, there would be no way of escaping from the conclusion that the impulsive Jean Jacques and the imprudent Madame d'Houdetot were either deliberate hypocrites or else dishonest comedians, who practised for each other's benefit an imposture that deceived neither of them.

Here is the "Lettre à Sophie," which, if it be a genuine document, would prove that the author of the *Confessions* "lied" when he affirmed that the moon-

light interviews between himself and Madame d'Houdetot, in the summer of 1757, passed off harmlessly.

A SOPHIE (MADAME D'HOUDETOT)[1]

"*L'Ermitage, juin* 1757.

"Viens, Sophie, que j'afflige ton cœur injuste ; que je sois, à mon tour, sans pitié comme toi. Pourquoi

[1] Compare this effusion with the original story in his *Confessions*. "Tendres confidents l'un de l'autre, nos sentiments avoient tant de rapport, qu'il étoit impossible qu'ils ne se mêlassent pas en quelque chose ; et toutefois, au milieu de cette dangereuse ivresse, jamais elle ne s'est oubliée un moment ; et moi je proteste, je jure à la face du ciel, que, si quelquefois égaré par mes sens j'ai tenté de la rendre infidèle, jamais je ne l'ai véritablement désiré. La véhémence de ma passion la contenoit par elle-même. Le devoir des privations avoit exalté mon âme. L'éclat de toutes les vertus ornoit à mes yeux l'idole de mon cœur : en souiller la divine image eût été l'anéantir. J'aurois pu commettre le crime ; il a cent fois été commis dans mon cœur : mais avilir ma Sophie ! ah ! cela se pouvoit-il jamais ! non, non ; je le lui ai cent fois dit à elle-même : eusse-je été le maître de me satisfaire, sa propre volonté l'eût-elle mise à ma discrétion, hors quelques courts moments de délire, j'aurois refusé d'être heureux à ce prix. Je l'aimois trop pour vouloir la posséder.

"Il y a près d'une lieue de l'Ermitage à Eaubonne ; dans mes fréquents voyages il m'est arrivé quelquefois d'y coucher : un soir, après avoir soupé tête-à-tête, nous allâmes nous promener au jardin, par un très-beau clair de lune. Au fond de ce jardin étoit un assez grand taillis par où nous fûmes chercher un joli bosquet, orné d'une cascade dont je lui avois donné l'idée et qu'elle avoit fait exécuter. Souvenir immortel d'innocence et de jouissance ! Ce fut dans ce bosquet qu'assis avec elle sur un banc de gazon, sous un acacia tout chargé de fleurs, je trouvai, pour rendre les mouvements de mon cœur, un langage vraiment digne d'eux. *Ce fut la première et l'unique fois de ma vie ;* mais je fus sublime, si l'on peut nommer ainsi tout ce que l'amour le plus tendre et le plus ardent peut porter d'aimable et de séduisant dans un cœur d'homme. Que d'enivrantes larmes je versai sur ses genoux ! que je lui en fis verser malgré elle ! Enfin, dans un transport involontaire, elle s'écria : 'Non, jamais homme ne fut si aimable, et jamais amant n'aima comme vous ! Mais votre ami Saint-Lambert nous écoute, et mon cœur ne sauroit aimer deux fois.' Je me tus en soupirant ; je l'embrassai ; . . . . quel embrassement ! Mais ce fut tout. Il y avoit six mois qu'elle vivoit seule, c'est-à dire loin de son amant et de son mari ; il y en avoit trois que

t'épargnerois-je tandis que tu m'ôtes la raison, l'honneur et la vie ? Pourquoi te laisserois-je couler de paisibles jours, à toi qui me rends les miens insupportables ? Ah ! combien tu m'aurois été moins cruelle, si tu m'avois plongé dans le cœur un poignard au lieu du trait fatal qui me tue ! Vois ce que j'étois et ce que je suis devenu : vois à quel point tu m'as avili. Quand tu daignois m'écouter, j'étois plus qu'un homme ; depuis que tu me rebutes, je suis le dernier des mortels : j'ai perdu le sens, l'esprit et le courage ; d'un mot tu m'as tout ôté. Comment peux-tu te résoudre à détruire ainsi ton propre ouvrage ? Comment oses-tu rendre indigne de ton estime celui qui fut honoré de tes bontés ? Ah ! Sophie, je t'en conjure, ne te fais point rougir de l'ami que tu as cherché. C'est pour ta propre gloire que je te demande compte de moi. Ne suis-je pas ton bien ? N'en as-tu pas pris possession ? tu ne peux plus t'en dédire, et, puisque je t'appartiens, malgré moi-même et malgré toi, laisse-moi du moins mériter de t'appartenir. Rappelle-toi ces temps de félicité qui, pour mon tourment, ne sortiront jamais de ma mémoire. Cette flamme invisible, dont je reçus une seconde vie plus précieuse que la première, rendoit à mon âme, ainsi qu'à men sens, toute la vigueur de la jeunesse. L'ardeur de mes sentimens m'élevoit jusqu'à toi. Combien de fois ton cœur, plein d'un autre amour, fut-il ému des transports du mien ? *Combien de fois*[1] *m'as-tu dit dans le bosquet de la cascade : Vous êtes l'amant le plus tendre dont j'eusse l'idée : non, jamais homme n'aima comme vous.* Quel triomphe pour moi que cet aveu dans ta bouche !

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je la voyois presque tous les jours, et toujours l'amour en tiers entre elle et moi. Nous avions soupé tête-à-tête, nous étions seuls, dans un bosquet, au clair de la lune, et, après deux heures de l'entretien le plus vif et le plus tendre, elle sortit, au milieu de la nuit, de ce bosquet et des bras de son ami, aussi intacte, aussi pure de corps et de cœur qu'elle y étoit entrée. Lecteur, pesez toutes ces circonstances ; je n'ajouterai rien de plus."

[1] " *Un soir*, aprés avoir soupé," etc.—" *ce fut la première et l'unique fois de ma vie*," etc.

assurément il n'étoit pas suspect; il étoit digne des feux dont je brûlois de t'y rendre sensible en dépit des tiens, et de t'arracher une pitié que tu te reprochois si vivement. Eh! pourquoi te la reprocher? En quoi donc étois-tu coupable? En quoi la fidélité étoit-elle offensée par des bontés qui laissoient ton cœur et tes sens tranquilles? Si j'eusse été plus aimable et plus jeune, l'épreuve eût été plus dangereuse : mais, puisque tu l'as soutenue, pourquoi t'en repentir? Pourquoi changer de conduite avec tant de raisons d'être contente de toi? Ah! que ton amant même seroit fier de ta constance, s'il savoit ce qu'elle a surmonté! Si ton cœur et moi sommes seuls témoins de ta force, c'est à moi seul à m'en humilier. Etois-je digne de t'inspirer des désirs? Mais quelquefois ils s'éveillent malgré qu'on en ait, et tu sus toujours triompher des tiens. Où est le crime d'écouter un autre amour, si ce n'est le danger de le partager? Loin d'éteindre tes premiers feux, les miens sembloient les irriter encore. Ah! si jamais tu fus tendre et fidèle, n'est-ce pas dans ces moments délicieux où mes pleurs t'en arrachoient quelquefois; où les épanchemens de nos cœurs s'excitoient mutuellement; où, sans se répondre, ils savoient s'entendre; où ton amour s'animoit aux expressions du mien, et où l'amant qui t'est cher recueilloit au fond de ton âme tous les transports exprimés par celui qui t'adore? L'amour a tout perdu par ce changement bizarre que tu couvres de si vains prétextes. Il a perdu ce divin enthousiasme qui t'élevoit à mes yeux au-dessus de toi-même; qui te montroit à la fois charmante par tes faveurs, sublime par ta résistance, et redoubloit par tes bontés mon respect et mes adorations. Il a perdu, chez toi, cette confiance aimable qui te faisoit verser dans ce cœur qui t'aime tous les sentimens du tien. Nos conversations étoient touchantes : un attendrissement continuel les remplissoit de son charme. Mes transports, que tu ne pouvois partager, ne laissoient pas de te plaire, et j'aimois à t'entendre exprimer les tiens pour un autre objet

qui leur étoit cher : tant l'épanchement et la sensibilité ont du prix, même sans celui du retour ! Non, quand j'aurois été aimé, à peine aurois-je pu vivre dans un état plus doux, et je te défie de jamais dire à ton amant même rien de plus touchant que ce que tu me disois de lui mille fois le jour. Qu'est devenu ce temps, cet heureux temps ? La sécheresse et la gêne, la tristesse ou le silence, remplissent désormais nos entretiens. Deux ennemis, deux indifférens, vivroient entre eux avec moins de réserve que ne font deux cœurs faits pour s'aimer. Le mien, resserré par la crainte, n'ose plus donner l'essor aux feux dont il est dévoré. Mon âme intimidée se concentre et s'affaisse sur elle même ; tous mes sentimens sont comprimés par la douleur. Cette lettre, que j'arrose de froides larmes, n'a plus rien de ce feu sacré qui couloit de ma plume en de plus doux instans. Si nous sommes un moment sans témoins, à peine ma bouche ose-t-elle exprimer un sentiment qui m'oppresse, qu'un air triste et mécontent le resserre au fond de mon cœur. Le vôtre, à son tour, n'a plus rien à me dire. Hélas ! n'est-ce pas me dire assez combien vous vous déplaisez avec moi, que ne me plus parler de ce que vous aimez ? Ah ! parlez-moi de lui sans cesse, afin que ma présence ne soit pas pour vous sans plaisir.

" Il vous est plus aisé de changer, ô Sophie ! que de cacher ce changement à mes yeux. N'alléguez plus de fausses excuses qui ne peuvent m'en imposer. Les évènemens ont pu vous forcer à une circonspection dont je ne me suis jamais plaint : mais, tant que le cœur ne change pas, les circonstances ont beau changer, son langage est toujours le même ; et, si la prudence vous force à me voir plus rarement, qui vous force de perdre avec moi le langage du sentiment pour prendre celui de l'indifférence ? Ah ! Sophie, Sophie ! ose me dire que ton amant t'est plus cher aujourd'hui que quand tu daignois m'écouter et me plaindre, et que tu m'attendrissois à mon tour, aux expressions de ta passion pour lui ! Tu l'adorois et te laissois adorer ; tu soupirois

pour un autre, mais ma bouche et mon cœur recueilloient tes soupirs. Tu ne te faisois point un vain scrupule de lui cacher des entretiens qui tournoient au profit de ton amour. Le charme de cet amour croissoit sous celui de l'amitié : ta fidélité s'honoroit du sacrifice des plaisirs non partagés. Tes refus, tes scrupules étoient moins pour lui que pour moi. Quand les transports de la plus violente passion qui fut jamais t'excitoient à la pitié, tes yeux inquiets cherchoient dans les miens si cette pitié ne t'ôteroit point mon estime, et la seule condition que tu mettois aux preuves de ton amitié étoit que je ne cesserois point d'être ton ami.

" Cesser d'être ton ami ? chère et charmante Sophie, vivre et ne plus t'aimer est-il pour mon âme un état possible ? Eh ! comment mon cœur se fût-il détaché de toi, quand aux chaînes de l'amour tu joignois les doux nœuds de la reconnoissance ? J'en appelle à ta sincérité. Toi qui vis, qui causas ce délire, ces pleurs, ces ravissemens, ces extases, ces transports qui n'étoient pas faits pour un mortel, dis, ai-je goûté tes faveurs de manière à mériter de les perdre ? Ah ! non, tu t'es barbarement prévalue, pour me les ôter, des tendres craintes qu'elles m'ont inspirées. J'en suis devenu plus épris mille fois, il est vrai, mais plus respectueux, plus soumis, plus attentif à ne jamais t'offenser. Comment ton bon cœur a-t-il pu se résoudre, en me voyant tremblant devant toi, à s'armer de ma passion contre moi-même, et à me rendre misérable pour avoir mérité d'être heureux ?

" Le premier prix de tes bontés fut de m'apprendre à vaincre mon amour par lui-même, de sacrifier mes plus ardens désirs à celle qui les faisoit naître, et mon bonheur à ton repos. Je ne rappellerai point ce qui s'est passé ni dans ton parc, ni dans ta chambre ; mais pour sentir jusqu'où l'impression de tes charmes inspire à mes sens l'ardeur de te posséder, ressouviens-toi du mont Olympe, ressouviens-toi de ces mots écrits au crayon sur un chêne. J'aurois pu les tracer du plus

pur de mon sang, et je ne saurois te voir ni penser à toi qu'il ne s'épuise et ne renaisse sans cesse. Depuis ces momens délicieux où tu m'as fait éprouver tout ce qu'un amour plaint, et non partagé, peut donner de plaisir au monde, tu m'es devenue si chère que *je n'ai plus osé désirer d'être heureux à tes dépens*[1] et qu'un seul refus de ta part eût fait taire un délire insensé. Je m'en serois livré plus innocemment aux douceurs de l'état où tu m'avois mis; l'épreuve de ta force m'eût rendu plus circonspect à t'exposer à des combats que j'avois trop peu su te rendre pénibles. J'avois tant de titres pour mériter que tes faveurs et ta pitié même ne me fussent point ôtées; hélas! que faut-il que je me dise pour me consoler de les avoir perdues, si ce n'est que j'aimai trop pour les savoir conserver! J'ai tout fait pour remplir les dures conditions que te m'avois imposées, je leur ai conformé toutes mes actions, et, si je n'ai pu contenir de même mes discours, mes regards, mes ardens désirs, de quoi peux-tu m'accuser, si ce n'est de m'être engagé, pour te plaire, à plus que la force humaine ne peut tenir?

[1] The writer of the *Lettre à Sophie* is evidently intended to profess the pernicious doctrine *condemned by Rousseau* (*Conf.* Part I. liv. v.) as the hateful system employed by the seducer of Madame de Warens to persuade her that an act has in itself no importance if the conscience and intention of the performer remain without voluntary impurity or faithlessness. Not only is it certain that Rousseau never upheld this odious maxim, but in connection with the special case of his own relations with Madame d'Houdetot, his affirmations in the *Confessions*, in his letters to Saint-Lambert and to Madame d'Houdetot herself, are positive and definite in their denial that the "complaisance" of Madame d'Houdetot ever made her faithless in act to Saint-Lambert. The writer of the *Lettre à Sophie*, then (*who we know was not Rousseau*), made out Rousseau to be a liar and a hypocrite. We may dismiss the suggestion that Rousseau dictated this letter, or that it was a copy of any letter written by him. But without examining the original document, of which Musset Pathay had the copy, we cannot judge, first, what truth belongs to the assertion that it was *chiffrée* by Rousseau; and second, whether we have to deal with a falsified letter or a fabrication made of stolen materials from the *Confessions*.

Sophie! j'aimai trente ans la vertu! ah! crois-tu que j'aie déjà le cœur endurci au crime? Non; mes remords égalent mes transports; c'est tout dire: mais pourquoi ce cœur se livroit-il aux légères faveurs que tu daignois m'accorder, tandis que son murmure effrayant me détournoit si fortement d'un attentat plus téméraire? Tu le sais, toi qui vis mes égaremens, si, même alors, ta personne me fut sacrée! Jamais mes ardens désirs, jamais mes tendres supplications n'osèrent un instant solliciter le bonheur suprême, que je ne me sentisse arrêté par les cris intérieurs d'une âme épouvantée. Cette voix terrible, qui ne trompe point, me faisoit frémir à la seule idée de souiller de parjure et d'infidélité celle que j'aime, celle que je voudrois voir aussi parfaite que l'image que j'en porte au fond de mon cœur, celle qui doit m'être inviolable à tant de titres. J'aurois donné l'univers pour un moment de félicité; mais t'avilir, Sophie! ah! non, il n'est pas possible, et, quand j'en serois le maître, je t'aime trop pour te posséder jamais.

"Rends donc à celui qui n'est pas moins jaloux que toi de ta propre gloire des bontés qui ne sauroient la blesser. Je ne prétends m'excuser ni envers toi, ni envers moi-même: je me reproche tout ce que tu me fais désirer. S'il n'eût fallu triompher que de moi, peut-être l'honneur de vaincre m'en eût-il donné le pouvoir; mais devoir au dégoût de ce qu'on aime des privations qu'on eût dû s'imposer, ah! c'est ce qu'un cœur sensible ne peut supporter sans désespoir. Tout le prix de la victoire est perdu dès qu'elle n'est pas volontaire. Si ton cœur ne m'ôtoit rien, qu'il seroit digne du mien te tout refuser! Si jamais je puis me guérir, ce sera quand je n'aurai que ma passion seule à combattre. Je suis coupable, je le sens trop, mais je m'en console en songeant que tu ne l'es pas. Une complaisance insipide à ton cœur, qu'est-elle pour toi, qu'un acte de pitié dangereux à la première épreuve, indifférent pour qui l'a pu supporter une fois? O Sophie! après des momens

si doux, l'idée d'une éternelle privation est trop affreuse à celui qui gémit de ne pouvoir s'identifier avec toi. Quoi! tes yeux attendris ne se baisseroient plus avec cette douce pudeur qui m'enivre de volupté? Quoi! mes lèvres brûlantes ne déposeroient plus sur ton cœur mon âme avec mes baisers? Quoi! je n'éprouverois plus ce frémissement céleste, ce feu rapide et dévorant qui, plus prompt que l'éclair. . . . Moment! moment inexprimable! quel cœur, quel homme, quel dieu peut t'avoir ressenti et renoncer à toi?

"Souvenirs amers et délicieux! laisserez-vous jamais mes sens et mon cœur en paix? et toutefois les plaisirs que vous me rappelez ne sont point ceux qu'il regrette le plus. Ah! non, Sophie, il en fut pour moi de plus doux encore et dont ceux-là tirent leur plus grand prix, parce qu'ils en étoient le gage. Il fut, il fut un temps où mon amitié t'étoit chère, et où tu savois me le témoigner. Ne m'eusses-tu rien dit, ne m'eusses-tu fait aucune caresse, un sentiment plus touchant et plus sûr m'avertissoit que j'étois bien avec toi. Mon cœur te cherchoit, et le tien ne me repoussoit pas. L'expression du plus tendre amour qui fut jamais n'avoit rien de rebutant pour toi. On eût dit à ton empressement à me voir que je te manquois quand tu ne m'avois pas vu: les yeux ne fuyoient pas les miens, et leurs regards n'étoient pas ceux de la froideur: tu cherchois mon bras à la promenade; tu n'étois pas si soigneuse à me dérober l'aspect de tes charmes, et, quand ma bouche osoit presser la tienne, quelquefois, au moins, je la sentois résister. Tu ne m'aimois pas, Sophie, mais tu le laissois aimer, et j'étois heureux. Tout est fini: je ne suis plus rien, et me sentant étranger, a charge, importun près de toi, je ne suis pas moins misérable de mon bonheur passé que de mes peines présentes. Ah! si je me t'avois jamais vue attendrie, je me consolerois de ton indifférence et me contenterois de t'adorer en secret; mais me voir déchirer le cœur par la main qui me rendit heureux, et être oublié de celle qui m'appeloit son doux ami! ô

toi, qui peux tout sur mon être, apprends-moi à supporter cet état affreux, ou le change, ou me fais mourir. Je voyois les douleurs que m'apprêtoit la fortune, et je m'en consolois en y voyant tes plaisirs; j'ai appris à braver les outrages du sort, mais les tiens! qui me les fera supporter? La vallée que tu fuis pour me fuir, le prochain retour de ton amant, les intrigues de ton indigne sœur, l'hiver qui nous sépare, mes maux qui s'accroissent, ma jeunesse qui fuit de plus en plus, tandis que la tienne est dans sa fleur, tout se réunit pour m'ôter tout espoir; mais rien n'est au-dessus de mon courage que tes mépris. Avec la consolation du cœur, je dédaignerois les plaisirs des sens, je m'en passerois au moins: si tu me plaignois, je ne serois plus à plaindre. Aide-moi, de grâce, à m'abuser moi-même: mon cœur affligé ne demande pas mieux; je cherche moi-même sans cesse à te supposer pour moi le plus tendre intérêt que tu n'as plus. Je force tout ce que tu me dis pour l'interpréter en ma faveur: je m'applaudis de mes propres douleurs quand elles semblent t'avoir touchées: dans l'impossibilité de tirer de toi de vrais signes d'attachement, un rien suffit pour m'en créer de chimériques. A notre dernière entrevue, où tu déployois de nouveaux charmes pour m'enflammer de nouveaux feux, deux fois tu me regardas en dansant. Tous tes mouvements s'imprimoient au fond de mon âme; mes avides regards traçoient tous tes pas: pas un de tes gestes n'échappoit à mon cœur, et dans l'éclat de ton triomphe, ce foible cœur avoit la simplicité de croire que tu daignois t'occuper de moi. Cruelle, rends-moi l'amitié qui m'est si chère: tu me l'as offerte; je l'ai reçue; tu n'as plus droit de me l'ôter. Ah! si jamais je te voyois un vrai signe de pitié; que ma douleur ne fût point importune; qu'un regard attendri se tournât sur moi; que ton bras se jetât autour de mon cou; qu'il me pressât contre ton sein: que ta douce voix me dît avec un soupir: *Infortuné! que je te plains!* oui, tu m'aurois consolé de tout: mon âme reprendroit sa

vigueur, et je reviendrois digne encore d'avoir été bien voulu de toi. . . ."

This letter was printed for the first time by Musset Pathay in 1822, in the appendix to a second edition of his *Histoire de la Vie et des Ouvrages de Jean Jacques Rousseau.* In his first edition, Musset Pathay, when discussing Madame d'Houdetot's relations with Rousseau, had quoted the account given by Madame Broutain, a contemporary of the lady who survived her; who professed to have questioned her about what had become of the passionate letters addressed to her by Rousseau; and which he himself found it difficult to believe she had burnt.

"Jean-Jacques," wrote Musset Pathay, "en rendant à Madame d'Houdetot les lettres qu'il en avait reçues, redemanda les siennes. Elle lui répondit qu'elle les avait brûlées. *L'on ne met point au feu de pareilles lettres*, s'écria-t-il, *on a trouvé brûlantes celles de Julie. Eh dieu! qu'aurait-on dit de celles-là?* Madame Broutain, qui demeurait à Cernay, dans le voisinage d'Eaubonne, voulant connaître la vérité, et désirant sans doute que ces lettres eussent été conservées, interrogea un jour à ce sujet madame d'Houdetot, qui répondit qu'effectivement elle les avait brûlées, à l'exception d'une seule, qu'elle n'eut pas le courage de détruire, *parce que c'était un chef-d'œuvre d'eloquence et de passion*, et qu'elle l'avait remise à M. de *Saint-Lambert.*

"Madame Broutain saisit la première occasion pour s'informer auprès du poète du sort de cette lettre : elle s'était égarée dans un déménagement, il ne savait pas ce qu'elle était dévenue; telles furent ses réponses. Elle ne pouvait tomber en de plus mauvaises mains que dans celles d'un rival. *On doit regretter ces lettres.* On sait, par la *Nouvelle Héloïse*, comment Jean Jacques exprimait une passion factice, on aurait su quel langage lui inspirait une passion réelle."

The "regrets" expressed by Musset Pathay on this occasion had the same results as the "regrets" expressed by Laporte for the disappearance of Madame d'Epinay's *Memoirs*, viz. the "discovery" of the document whose loss was deplored. Nor is this all. When one examines all the circumstances, one cannot but suspect that this new "discovery" may safely be attributed to the same agents who found (in the very moment when its publication could be safely made) the sensational manuscript which had slumbered in the hands of the "heirs of Lecourt de Villière." Nothing can be more vague, in any case, than the information vouchsafed the public about the "Lettre à Sophie," presented by its editor to his readers, with the following notice :—

"C'est probablement cette lettre si regrettée, la seule que Madame d'Houdetot ne livra point aux flammes. Voyez à la fin, la note de M. de Keratry."

Before quoting M. de Keratry's note, let us see all that Musset Pathay himself has to say by way of justifying his assertion as to the "probable" character of this letter.

"Il résulte des renseignements qui nous ont été donnés," writes Musset Pathay, "que cette lettre était chiffrée par Rousseau ; et que c'est ce chiffre que posséde M. Moultou, à qui nous en devons la copie."

So that it is not even maintained that the letter of which Musset Pathay received a copy, was *written* by Rousseau, but only that it was *numbered* by Rousseau—*chiffrée par Rousseau.* In other words, accepting without discussing them the facts given us, we should have to believe that Jean Jacques, who was a copyist by trade, but who did not employ any copyist, must have dictated to some one else a letter that was not only very private, but very compromising ; inasmuch as it proved him a hypocrite in his letters to Saint-Lambert and a liar in his *Confessions!* Nor is this all. Having trusted to some one else the task of copying this damnatory letter, Jean Jacques must not merely have

kept it twenty-two years, but have actually deposited it with his justificatory documents in the hands of Paul Moultou! This is what would result from the account given in Keratry's note of the manner in which Pierre Moultou, Paul Moultou's son, came into possession of the letter of which he sent Musset Pathay a copy. [It may here be recalled that this same Pierre Moultou is known to us unfavourably as having, immediately after his father's death in 1789, violated Rousseau's last wishes by the publication of the second part of the *Confessions* without consulting Dupeyrou; who, in agreement with Rousseau's true friend, Paul Moultou, had intended to carry through the author's instructions by retarding this publication until 1800.]

NOTE DE M. DE KERATRY SUR CETTE LETTRE.

"Madame d'Houdetot ayant déclaré à J. J. Rousseau, quand il lui redemandait les lettres qu'il lui avait écrites pendant le séjour de l'un à l'Hermitage et de l'autre à Eaubonne, que ces lettres avaient été détruites par elle, à l'exception d'une seule, confiée à St.-Lambert, et cette dernière ayant elle-même disparu, il y a lieu de croire que ce qu'on vient de lire est uniquement une copie du brouillon trouvé dans les papiers de J. J. Rousseau, dont M. Moultou reçut le dépôt. Ce qu'il y a de certain, c'est qu'on doit cette lettre à M. Moultou fils, qui en a fait l'envoi à M. de Musset, auteur de l'*Histoire de la Vie et des Ouvrages de J. J. Rousseau*, production en harmonie avec le caractère et les actes de ce grand écrivain sur lequel elle lève bien des doutes. Sans avoir jeté les yeux sur l'autographe des pages précédentes, nous osons affirmer qu'elles appartiennent à l'auteur d'*Emile;* mais nous sommes persuadé qu'il les aura retouchées avant d'en faire l'envoi à Madame d'Houdetot. C'est sa verve, c'est sa chaleur de sentiment et sa force de pensée ordinaire, tempérée par un naturel charmant et quelquefois aussi accompagnée de formes paradoxales.

C'est donc toujours Rousseau, mais ce n'est qu'un premier jet de sa plume. Notre opinion à ce sujet prendra un caractère d'évidence, pour peu que l'on remarque les parties négligées de cette lettre, ses incorrections nombreuses, les répétitions des mêmes termes, là où il était facile de les éviter, soin dont Rousseau s'acquittait avec scrupule, souvent par le seul motif d'euphonie, ainsi que l'attestent les nombreux manuscrits de cet auteur. D'ailleurs, cette lettre est tellement remarquable en elle-même, que nous ne serions pas étonné qu'elle fût une de celles que madame d'Houdetot sacrifia avec le plus de regrets, peut-être même celle qu'elle ne put se résoudre à livrer aux flammes, et qu'elle crut faussement pouvoir préserver de la destruction en la confiant à St.-Lambert. Un rival, même un rival heureux, est rarement digne d'un tel dépôt! *Signé* Ky."

One phrase alone in this note establishes the value of Keratry's judgment:—

"Sans avoir jeté les yeux sur l'autographe des pages précédentes nous osons affirmer qu'elles appartiennent à l'auteur d'Emile;" decides this arbitrary critic.

For our part, our decision must necessarily be that until the actual document that Pierre Moultou professed to have found amongst the papers deposited by Rousseau with his father is re-discovered, and has been carefully examined, it is not possible to arrive at any positive conclusion. In the meanwhile, what can be affirmed is that the "Letter à Sophie," as we have it reproduced in the copy sent to Musset Pathay, exhibits all the characteristics which belong to the stock of libels of which the "*Lettre de Jean Jacques Rousseau à Jean François, Archevêque et Seigneur d'Auch*" (imitated from the *Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont, Archevêque de Paris*) is an excellent specimen. In both these "Letters" we recognize the familiar methods of the conspirators—the twisting of phrases actually employed by Rousseau out of their true sense; and the mixture

with the doctrines he professed, of mischievous sophistries entirely alien to them. What can be affirmed, also, is that *no reason has ever been given, and that no excuse can be found*, for the present place given the "Letter à Sophie" amongst letters really written by Rousseau, in his published correspondence.

NOTE H H

(Grimm) "It is said that he will follow Milord-Maréchal to Scotland; and Rousseau exclaimed in this connection: 'At length I shall have the happiness of living amongst men whose language I shall not understand,'" p. 127.

The intention is to make this speech testify to the ferocious misanthropy of the man who finds happiness in isolation from human sympathy. This impression cannot survive the reading of the letter where it occurs in a note of Rousseau's to Lord Marshal Keith: where an allusion is made to the project of a retreat in Scotland shared by Lord Marshal, David Hume and Rousseau. At this time all Rousseau knew about Hume was derived from Lord Marshal's account of him.

A MILORD-MARECHAL.

"*Novembre* 1762.

"Non, milord, je ne suis ni en santé, ni content; mais quand je reçois de vous quelque marque de bonté et de souvenir, je m'attendris, j'oublie mes peines: au surplus, j'ai le cœur abattu, et je tire bien moins de courage de ma philosophie que de votre vin d'Espagne.

"Madame la comtesse de Boufflers demeure rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth, proche le Temple; mais je ne comprends pas comment vous n'avez pas son adresse, puisqu'elle me marque que vous lui avez encore écrit pour l'engager à me faire accepter les offres du roi. De grâce, milord, ne vous servez plus de médiateur avec moi, et daignez être bien persuadé, je vous supplie, que ce que

vous n'obtiendrez pas directement ne sera obtenu par nul autre. Madame de Boufflers semble oublier, dans cette occasion, le respect qu'on doit aux malheureux. Je lui répondis plus durement que je ne devois, peut-être, et je crains que cette affaire ne me brouille avec elle, si même cela n'est déjà fait.

"Je ne sais, milord, si vous songez encore à notre château en Espagne; mais je sens que cette idée, si elle ne s'exécute pas, fera le malheur de ma vie. Tout me déplaît, tout me gêne, tout m'importune: *je n'ai plus de confiance et de liberté qu'avec vous, et, séparé par d'insurmontables obstacles, du peu d'amis qui me restent, je ne puis vivre en paix que loin de toute autre société. C'est, j'espère, un avantage que j'aurai dans votre terre, n'étant connu là-bas de personne, et ne sachant pas la langue du pays.* Mais je crains que le désir d'y venir vous-même n'ait été plutôt une fantaisie qu'un vrai projet; et je suis mortifié aussi que vous n'ayez aucune réponse de M. Hume. Quoi qu'il en soit, si je ne puis vivre avec vous, je veux vivre seul. Mais il y a bien loin d'ici en Ecosse, et je suis bien peu en état d'entreprendre un si long trajet. Pour Colombier, il n'y faut pas penser; j'aimerois autant habiter une ville: c'est assez d'y faire de temps en temps des voyages lorsque je saurai ne pas vous importuner.

"J'attends pourtant avec impatience le retour de la belle saison pour vous y aller voir, et décider avec vous quel parti je dois prendre, si j'ai encore long-temps à trainer mes chagrins et mes maux: car cela commence à devenir long; et n'ayant rien prévu de ce qui m'arrive, j'ai peine à savoir comment je dois m'en tirer. J'ai demandé à M. de Malesherbes la copie de quatre lettres qui je lui écrivis l'hiver dernier, croyant avoir peu de temps encore à vivre, et n'imaginant pas que j'aurois tant à souffrir. Ces lettres contiennent la peinture exacte de mon caractère, et la clef de toute ma conduite, autant que j'ai pu lire dans mons propre cœur. L'intérêt que vous daignez prendre à moi me fait croire que vous

ne serez pas fâché de les lire, et je les prendrai en allant à Colombier."

NOTE I

TRONCHIN AND J. J. ROUSSEAU

(See page 116.)

What are the historical facts of the relationships between the Genevese Doctor Tronchin and Jean Jacques Rousseau?

In the *Confessions*, Rousseau says that Tronchin sought his acquaintance, and professed great friendship for him for some three years; that afterwards, under the influences of Grimm and Madame d'Epinay, he became his implacable enemy and persecutor. He adds: "I only gave him the name of *le jongleur* long after he had become my declared enemy; and had excited bitter persecutions against me at Geneva, and elsewhere."—*Confessions*, part ii. book ix.

The usual method of stating the case is to affirm that Rousseau first of all professed "veneration" for Tronchin; and then, following his usual method of quarrelling with his friends and "benefactors," became suspicious of the doctor, on account of his friendship for Madame d'Epinay, and ended by calling him *le jongleur*; and by describing him as his enemy and persecutor.

Some previously unpublished letters, given in *Les Annales de la Société de J. J. Rousseau*, in December 1905, by M. Henri Tronchin, a descendant of the once famous Genevese doctor, help to a final decision of some disputed questions in connection with this case.

1. These original letters prove that it was not Rousseau who, in the first place, proclaimed his veneration for Tronchin, but that it was Tronchin who went out of his way to approach his already famous compatriot, the author of the two *Discourses*, with expressions of enthusiastic sympathy, and of admiration for his genius and virtue.

2. They prove that it was not Rousseau who, after a friendly correspondence of three years, offended Tronchin

by discourtesy, or by reproaches, or by suspicions; but that it was Tronchin who gave his correspondent just cause of offence, by his assumption of a right to lecture and reprove him, in connection with circumstances that did not concern him (Tronchin) in the very least, where he had no knowledge of the true events; and where he permitted himself to pronounce judgment, in a tone of self-sufficient arrogance, entirely unwarranted either by the terms of his intimacy with Rousseau, or of his moral, intellectual, or even social superiority over the man of genius towards whom he took up this attitude.

3. They prove not only, what was already well established, that Doctor Tronchin was one of the most influential and persistent instigators of all the measures taken at Geneva against Rousseau's books and his person, but also that he was in constant communication with Grimm; and supplied him with the malicious falsehoods in connection with the alleged efforts of the author of the *Letters from the Mountain* to stir up civil war in his native city, falsehoods which the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* circulated secretly throughout Europe.

And, lastly, these documents prove that Jean Jacques, who has been so severely blamed for giving Tronchin the name of "le jongleur," was familiarly described by Tronchin himself as "le miserable Rousseau"; "un charletan de la vertu"; "un méchant coquin"; "un scélérat"; "un incendiaire"; "un démon"; "l'objet du mêpris et de la haine publique," etc.

The two first letters of importance supplied by M. Henri Tronchin are those which explain the commencement of this acquaintanceship.

It was after Rousseau's return to Paris from his visit to Geneva, in the summer of 1754, that he received his first letter from the doctor; whom at that time he had never met.

"Rousseau s'éloignait de Genève au moment même où Tronchin y établissait ses pénates," writes M. H.

Tronchin. "Le médecin et le philosophe, tout porte à le croire, ne se rencontrèrent pas alors et ne s'étaient jamais vus quand, un an plus tard, ils entrèrent en relations épistolaires.

"Depuis longtemps Rousseau se disait très malade. De Luc le pressait de consulter Tronchin par correspondance, Jean-Jacques s'y refuse. De Luc revient à la charge et, à sa requête, Tronchin intervient personnellement auprès de Rousseau :

" 'Je suppose, monsieur, que votre ami M. De Luc vous a dit ce que je pense ; j'y perdrais trop s'il ne l'a pas fait ; l'estime que j'ai pour vous est une dette et c'est de toutes les dettes que je contracterai jamais celle que je voudrais payer avec le plus d'exactitude.

" 'Se pourrait-il, monsieur, qu'avec de tels sentiments, je ne prisse un intérêt bien vif à l'état de votre santé ? *Elle intéresse tous les hommes en intéressant la vertu que vous connaissez, que vous aimez et que vous défendez mieux que personne.*

" 'Ce n'est point comme médecin que j'y prends part, il n'y a aucun rapport entre le cas que je fais de vous et le besoin que vous pouvez avoir de mon art ; il y en a encore moins entre ce besoin et mes lumières ; il me suffit de faire des vœux pour votre santé ; je dois laisser à de plus sages que moi le soin d'y pourvoir.

" 'On nous a fait espérer, monsieur, que nous vous verrons à Genève au printemps ; ma peine redoublerait si votre santé y portait obstacle, mes vœux redoublent aussi et seront l'expression de l'estime et de la considération avec laquelle je serai toujours, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.' "[1]

Rousseau replied not only with extreme courtesy, but with much gratitude for the evidence the doctor's letter gave of interest in his health and appreciation of of his work. He declined the offer because he had already arrived at the resolution of accepting these recurring attacks of painful illness as irremediable, and

[1] MSS. Tronchin. De Genève, 12 décembre 1755, inédit.

only aggravated by the treatment he had undergone at the hands of the most famous physicians of the day. But he showed his respect for Tronchin's talent, and his friendship for Madame d'Epinay, by asking that the service he declined for himself might be transferred to her. All this goes to prove the veracity of the account of these events given in the *Confessions*. (Part ii. book viii.)

"Par combien de raisons, monsieur, ne devais-je pas vous prévenir,[1] mais je respectais vos travaux et n'osais vous dérober un temps destiné au soulagement ou à l'instruction des hommes.

" Je suis pénétré de vos bontés et s'il y avait quelque espoir à ma guérison, comme vous êtes le seul de qui je la pourrais attendre, vous êtes aussi celui de qui j'aimerais mieux la recevoir. Mais une mauvaise conformation d'organe apportée dès ma naissance et le long progrès d'un mal déclaré depuis dix ans me font juger que tout accoutumé que vous êtes à faire des miracles celui-ci vous échapperait ou du moins vous prendrait pour l'opérer un temps et des soins dus à des gens plus utiles que moi au monde et à la patrie. Je ne renonce pas pourtant à profiter un jour de l'attention que vous voulez bien donner au détail de ma maladie, mais la description de mes douleurs passées, le sentiment des présentes et l'image de celles qui m'attendent me font tomber la plume des mains et m'ôtent d'autant plus aisément le courage que l'espoir de la guérison ne le soutient plus. Depuis trois ans j'ai renoncé à tous les secours de la médecine, dont une longue expérience m'a montré l'inutilité par rapport à moi. J'ai mis à profit pour jouir de la vie bien des moments que j'aurais assez désagréablement perdus à tenter de la prolonger. Il me semble que je n'ai pas besoin de la vaine illusion qui flatte la plupart des malades et quelque confiance que j'aie en vos lumières, le désir que j'aurais de vivre auprés de vous a bien plus pour objet l'exemple de vos vertus que les secours de votre art.

[1] *Vous prévenir*—that is to say: have taken the first steps to seek your acquaintance.

"Les soins de l'amitié me retenaient auprés d'une dame assez dangereusement malade quand je reçus votre lettre, je la lui communiquai et sa lecture augmenta le désir qu'elle a depuis longtemps de vous consulter ; quoiqu'elle soit à la fleur de l'âge, son tempérament est si faible que sa famille et ses amis auraient grand besoin de vos soins pour se la conserver. M. de Gauffecourt qui la connait peut vous dire si elle en est digne. Je ne doute pas qu'elle vous écrive sitôt que ses forces le lui permettront.

"Donnez-lui, monsieur, les secours que vous daignez m'offrir ; sa santé n'est point sans ressources, et sa vie est nécessaire à ses enfants, à ses amis et à tous les honnêtes gens qui la connaissent.

"Je suis avec respect, monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.[1]

"Rousseau."

The next document of value we owe to M. Henri Tronchin is Rousseau's reply, dated from the Hermitage, 27th February 1757, to Tronchin's proposal that he should accept the post of Librarian. Here again, this newly-found evidence entirely supports the statements of the author of the *Confessions;* and demonstrates the fictitious character of the assumption that some proposal was made to him of a salaried post at Geneva before Madame d'Epinay's offer of the Hermitage, and that the story told in the *Memoirs* has to this extent to be taken seriously. In February 1757, Jean Jacques had been ten months at Montmorency. The quarrel with Diderot (the first one —about the phrase in the *Fils Naturel*) had taken place. Rousseau writes :

"Je vous dois beaucoup de remerciements, mon cher philosophe, mais je ne vous en fais point, et je trouve cela beaucoup plus convenable entre nous que les louanges que vous me donnez, et je vous laisse à juger là-dessus lequel de nous deux sait le mieux honorer l'autre. . . .

[1] MSS. Tronchin, Paris, 22 Dec. 1755, *inédit.*

". . . Quant au projet que vous inspire votre amitié pour moi, je commence par vous déclarer qu'on ne m'en a jamais proposé qui fût autant de mon goût et que ce vous imaginez est précisément ce que je choisirais s'il dépendait de moi. Mais où prendrais-je les talents nécessaires pour remplir un tel emploi; je ne connais aucun livre, je n'ai jamais su quelle était la bonne édition d'aucun ouvrage, je ne sais point de grec, très peu de latin et n'ai pas la moindre mémoire? Ne voila-t-il pas de quoi faire un illustre bibliothécaire? Ajoutez à cela ma mauvaise santé qui me permettrait difficilement d'être exact et jugez si vous avez bonne grâce à comparer vos fonctions à celles que vous me proposez, et si la probité devrait même me permettre de les accepter, quand même elles me seraient offertes, quelque honoré que j'en puisse être."[1]

Here, then, we have two services, proffered by Tronchin, and declined by Rousseau, which can hardly be said to justify the description of the Genevese doctor as one of Jean Jacques' very numerous "benefactors." Another service that this benevolent Doctor Tronchin wished to render the ungrateful Jean Jacques, and that might have deserved gratitude—*had it been accomplished*, was to find an asylum for Madame Levasseur. He quotes a letter from Rousseau, January 25, 1759, containing this sentence:—

"Je ne puis me transplanter tant que la bonne vieille n'aura pas d'asile; sitôt qu'elle en aura un je charge mon paquet et je marche."

By M. Henri Tronchin's account, his ancestor took great trouble, *but failed*, in his efforts to obtain a comfortable home for *la bonne vieille;* then Jean Jacques changed his mind, and, because Diderot interfered, "refused to be separated from the mother of Thérèse." The writer in the *Annales* does *not* give documentary evidence to support these last assertions.

But the letters which are of especial value amongst

[1] MSS. Tronchin de l'Hermitage, Fevrier 27, 1757, *inédit.*

these new documents are those which terminated their correspondence, or, more than this, closed the epoch of their friendship. These letters from Rousseau to Tronchin exactly supply what was needed to explain Tronchin's letters to Rousseau already published from the originals by M. Streckeisen-Moultou. I am giving here, for the first time, the complete series of these letters, reconstituted (after comparison of M. Henri Tronchin's Rousseau letters with the Streckeisen-Moultou Tronchin letters) in the order which the dates and the evidence of the letters themselves prove is correct.

In order to understand the situation, it should be remembered that when the *Lettre à d'Alembert* was published, in October 1758, Madame d'Epinay had been living for nearly a year in Geneva; that Tronchin was not only her doctor, but her most intimate friend; and that as a result of this intimacy, he had also become personally acquainted with Grimm, and had exchanged complimentary letters with Diderot. But although Rousseau had good reasons for supposing that Tronchin's sympathies were with his enemies there had been no breach between them, and he sent the doctor accordingly his "*Letter*"; and received from him an outwardly friendly acknowledgment. The doctor expressed his agreement in Rousseau's objections to the establishment of a theatre at Geneva, but differed from him in his opinion about the social advantages of the *Cercles*, which Rousseau had maintained fostered the spirit of citizenship but which the more rigorous doctor declared broke up family life. In this letter, Tronchin did not allude to the note in his Preface; and here he showed a just appreciation of the fact that Rousseau's quarrel with Diderot was no concern of his. In the spring of 1759, however, Grimm also took up his residence in Geneva; and remained there until Madame d'Epinay and he returned to Paris together in October 1759. This is the period when, as Rousseau correctly said in the *Confessions*, the seeds of distrust and dislike to him were sown in Geneva that he was to

reap the fruits of three years later. It was from Grimm, we may be sure, and not from Madame d'Epinay, that Voltaire and Tronchin received the venomous "confidences" (so-called) that the first holder of the secret betrayed in the *Sentiments des Citoyens* in 1765, and that the second circulated in gossip of this charitable and veracious character, in 1762.

"C'est grand dommage que cet homme n'ait que l'appareil de la vertu, ce qui explique comment, *ayant vécu dans l'impureté et ayant eu plusieurs enfants d'un concubine, il les a tous exposés.*"

And here I would point out that my recognition of the fact that Grimm was the scandalmonger who gave Voltaire the materials for this libel, does not in any way contradict my assertion that his silence about this particular charge in the *Correspondance Littéraire*, taken in connection with the absence of the charge from Diderot's *Tablets*, from his note added on to the *Essay upon Seneca*, and from the carefully re-arranged story of René in Madame d'Epinay's novel, goes to prove that the authors of the plot to create for the prophet of truth the reputation of a sophist and an impostor had some special reasons of their own for avoiding a subject that might have provoked inquiry into the true character of the "*conspiration amicale*" between Rousseau's old friends which it is admitted had something to do with his union with Thérèse Levasseur. The fact that Grimm did not wish to be "afflicted" by inquiries in connection with this matter, and his personal knowledge of the true circumstances, does not necessarily imply that he refused himself the pleasure of repeating with improvements what Rousseau had told him, and binding the receivers of his confidences to say nothing about them, or at any rate not to mention from whom they received their information. The letter written by Tronchin to Rousseau, in March 1759, does not reveal that the writer has been initiated into this secret; but it certainly goes to prove that he has been shown Diderot's *Tablets* and learned

how "*solitude and the habitation of woods*" has perverted a man entirely unfit for a country life, and thus rendered him guilty of crimes that have alienated all his friends.

Rousseau, ignorant of what he was drawing down upon himself, had written to the Doctor Tronchin on behalf of a bourgeois of Montmorency afflicted with a growth in the throat he feared was cancerous. Rousseau had commenced his letter with apologizing for claiming the time and attentions of a man so occupied; but whom he knew counted this time and attention well employed when they were given to the relief of suffering. The opening sentence of Tronchin's first letter, given by Streckeisen-Moultou, is by way of reply to this polite little speech.

FROM TRONCHIN TO ROUSSEAU

"*Mars*, 1759.[1]

"Soit, mon cher monsieur, que vous ayez voulu me communiquer la relation d'une maladie qui vous a paru singulière, ou que votre intention ait été de me procurer une occasion de faire du bien, je ne suis pas encore assez honnête homme, et je n'aime pas assez mon art, pour que ma bienfaisance ou ma curiosité l'emportent sur le plaisir que j'ai de recevoir de vos nouvelles. Si vous en aviez autant, mon cher monsieur, à m'en donner, j'en recevrais plus souvent. Mais dites-moi, comment se fait-il, ou plutôt comment se peut-il faire que l'ami de l'humanité ne le soit presque plus des hommes? Le tout qui n'est pourtant que l'ensemble des parties, peut-il

[1] *Streckeisen-Moultou*, vol ii. p. 327.

"Cette lettre est une réponse à une lettre de Rousseau qui n'est pas connue et dans laquelle il parait avoir consulter Tronchin sur ses infirmités," thus wrote the editor in 1865. M. Tronchin's documents prove that it was not about any infirmity of his own, but about the case of a neighbour at Montmorency that Rousseau consulted Tronchin.

devoir à ses parties une valeur qu'elles n'ont pas ? Ou n'aimera jamais une bande de voleurs dont chacun mérite la corde. Je soupçonne, mon cher monsieur, que votre indifférence, je me sers du nom le plus doux, tient à deux causes, au point du globe où vous vous trouvez, et à votre mauvaise santé ; car j'estime que nos principes sont les mêmes, mais je me porte bien, et je suis ici ; l'humeur aqueuse de mon œil et son cristallin transmettent à l'organe immédiat de ma vue les rayons tels qu'ils sont ; ils ne reçoivent dans ce trajet aucune teinte qui les altère ; je vis avec des hommes vertueux que j'estime et que j'aime, et c'est pourquoi je suis heureux. Ce n'est point aux biens que je n'ai pas et à la gloire que je méprise, que je dois mon bonheur, ce n'est qu'à l'estime et à l'amitié des honnêtes gens que j'en suis redevable, parce que je dois à l'une et à l'autre le désir au moins de m'en rendre digne. Ce désir me ramène sans cesse à mes devoirs, et me fait trouver dans le même objet le motif et la récompense. Je vois, et je vois toujours plus, que le plus grand bonheur est attaché à la plus grande vertu, et pour comble de satisfaction, j'ai un fils qui n'a que dix-sept ans et qui le voit aussi. Je ne suis donc plus heureux que vous parce que je me porte bien, et que vous n'êtes pas ici. Que n'y êtes vous, mon bon ami, et que ne puis-je au moins adoucir vos maux, si je ne puis les guérir."

Here is Rousseau's reply published by M. H. Tronchin in his *Annales.*

" J'ai reçu monsieur, avec votre obligeante lettre du 4 de ce mois, le mémoire que vous avez eu la bonté d'y joindre et dont je ne vous remercie pas, parce que c'est faire injure à un honnête homme de le remercier du bien qu'il fait. L'ordonnance a été remise à celui pour qui elle était destinée ; il a cru me devoir une visite, durant laquelle j'ai vu qu'il s'était livré à d'autres médecins, qui le traitaient avec du café, du chocolat bien vanillé, de l'équitation, etc. En sorte qu'un mieux apparent, qu'il croit être l'effet de ce nouveau régime, lui

faisant négliger votre ordonnance, je me la suis fait rendre ; sans avoir la même maladie, elle me fera plus de bien qu'à lui.

" Vous me demandez comment il se peut faire que l'ami de l'humanité ne le soit presque plus des hommes. Vous m'accusez d'avoir pour eux de l'indifférence, et vous appelez cela vous servir du nom le plus doux. Monsieur, pour vous répondre, il faut que je vous demande à mon tour sur quoi vous me jugez ? Votre manière de procéder avec moi ne ressemble pas mal à celle dont on use dans l'interrogatoire des infortunés qu'on défère à l'inquisition. Si j'ai des délateurs secrets, dites-moi quels ils sont et de quoi ils m'accusent ; alors je pourrai vous répondre. En attendant, de quoi m'accuserai-je moi même ?

" Si depuis ma naissance j'ai fait le moindre mal à qui que ce soit au monde, que ce mal retombe sur ma tête ! Si je refuse à quelqu'un quelque bien que je puisse faire, quelque service que je puisse rendre sans nuire à autrui, que j'éprouve à mon tour le même refus dans mon besoin ! Plaise à Dieu que la terre se couvre d'ennemis qui puissent, chacun pour soi, faire d'aussi bon cœur la même imprécation. Encore une fois, sur quoi me jugez-vous ? Si c'est sur mes actions, quelque mémoire que vous puissiez avoir, il me paraît toujours fort étrange que vous me condamniez sans m'avoir entendu. Si c'est sur mes écrits, cela me paraît encore plus étrange ; je suis bien sûr que le public ne me juge pas si sévèrement que vous, et j'ai tous les jours occasion de croire que les hommes en général et surtout les malheureux ne me regardent pas comme leur ennemi. On n'aimera jamais, dites-vous, des voleurs dignes de la corde ; pardonnez-moi, monsieur, leur père ou leur frère peut les aimer, se tourmenter après eux et leur crier avec colère : Quittez ce vil métier, misérables, vous allez tous vous faire pendre. Mais si Timon, qui ne serait pas fâché de les voir pendus, les rencontre, au lieu de les détourner de leur crime, il leur dira d'un air caressant : Courage, enfants, voilà qui va fort bien.

"Je vous félicite de tout mon cœur de votre bien-être, de votre santé, de vos amis, si je n'ai rien de tout cela, c'est un malheur et non pas un crime. Tel que je suis, je ne me plains ni de mon sort ni de mon séjour. Je suis l'ami du genre humain et l'on trouve partout des hommes. L'ami de la vérité trouve aussi partout des malveillants, et je n'ai pas besoin d'en aller chercher si loin. Si j'ai bien voulu devant le public rendre honneur à ma patrie, je ne prévoyais que trop que ce qui était vrai ne le serait pas longtemps. Je m'efforçais de retarder ce triste progrès par des considérations utiles, mais tant de causes l'ont accéléré, que le mal est désormais sans remède; loin d'aller être témoin de la décadence de nos mœurs, que ne puis-je fuir au loin pour ne pas l'apprendre. J'aime mieux vivre parmi les Français, que d'en aller chercher à Genève. Dans un pays où les beaux esprits sont si fêtés, Jean-Jacques Rousseau ne le serait guère, et quand il le serait, il n'aurait guère à s'en glorifier.

"O respectable Tronchin, restons tous deux où nous sommes! Vous pouvez encore honorer votre patrie. Pour moi, il ne me reste qu'à la pleurer. Adieu, je vous embrasse de tout mon cœur.

"Rousseau."

TRONCHIN'S LETTER IN REPLY

Vol. i. *Streckeisen-Moultou*, 1759.

"Vous voulez donc absolument que je m'explique, mon cher monsieur; puisque vous le voulez, je m'expliquerai. Vous que j'aime, vous qui étiez fait pour aimer et pour être aimé, vous vous êtes insensiblement détaché de tous vos amis, *de celui même que vous regretterez sans cesse, et qui manque bien plus à votre cœur qu'à vos écrits. C'était votre Aristarque, il était sévère et judicieux, vous ne l'avez plus et vous n'en voulez plus.* Ai-je besoin d'un autre argument pour vous prouver que je n'ai pas tort? Mais cet ami, me répondez-vous, avait des défauts; je vous demanderai à mon tour s'il

en est un parfait dans ce monde ; si vous, qui vous en plaignez, croyez l'être ; si moi, qui vous écris, le suis ou le serai ? Oh ! mon ami, il n'y a qu'un être parfait, et tous les autres ont des défauts absolus ou relatifs. Encore si vous aviez pu remplir le vide qu'il a fait dans votre cœur, mais je sais que vous ne l'avez pas rempli, et puisque *vous ne le voulez pas*, vous ne le remplirez jamais.[1] Vous le regretterez pourtant, c'est vous qui le dites, si vous le jugiez indigne de votre amitié, le diriez-vous ? Quel qu'il soit, vous avez été son juge et sa partie ; s'il en appelait à un autre tribunal, ne pourrait-il pas se défendre, est-il bien sûr que le jugement que vous en portez serait confirmé ? *Et quoique vous aimiez mieux vivre parmi des Français que de venir à Genève*, ce sont encore vos expressions, que voulez-vous que j'en pense, moi qui vous ai dit que j'ai le bonheur d'y vivre avec des hommes vertueux, et tels que l'on n'en voit nulle part de meilleurs. Je ne vous ai pas dit, il est vrai, qu'ils fussent parfaits, et comment le seraient-ils ? Ils ne peuvent pas l'être, ils sont nés petits et faibles, ils mourront faibles et petits. Cette patrie pourtant où je vis avec eux, paraît à vos yeux si peu estimable *que loin de vous en rapprocher, vous voudriez fuir plus loin encore, pour en être plus éloigné.* Ne vous *restait il qu'à la pleurer*, mon bon ami, lorsqu'en parlant d'un pays voisin vous ne pûtes vous empêcher de dire : *Hélas ! il est sur la route du mien !* Cette seule ligne valait une ode à sa louange, et il n'y a qu'un an que vous pensiez ainsi. Qu'est-il arrivé depuis ce temps-là ? Je n'en suis pas sorti, et je pense que je ne me fais aucune illusion ; notre patrie est cette année ce qu'elle était l'année passée, et si elle n'a rien gagné, au moins n'a-t-elle rien perdu. Aujourd'hui comme alors, les citoyens les plus distingués

[1] Tronchin is quoting Rousseau's Préface to the Lettre à d'Alembert. "J'avais un Aristarque sévère et judicieux : je ne l'ai plus ; je n'en veux plus : mais je le regretterai sans cesse ; et il manque bien plus à mon cœur qui à mes écrits."

sont ceux qui méritent le mieux de l'être. La vertu y jouit de tous ses avantages, la voix du peuple est celle de Dieu, du moins l'est-elle plus qu'ailleurs. Un magistrat sage, un clergé qui l'est aussi, une académie qui ne néglige rien de tout ce qui peut servir à l'éducation privée, un tribunal des mœurs qui veille à tout ce qui peut les maintenir, une police enfin aussi exacte qu'elle peut l'être, fait que nous plaignons ceux qui vivent à Montmorency, où faute de tout ce que nous avons ici, un citoyen peut craindre un autre citoyen, et manquer tout à la fois, dans le besoin, et de la protection des lois, et de la défense de soi-même. Si mon style vous paraît dur, ou si les choses que je vous dis le sont, je vous dirai, mon cher ami, ce que les quakers disaient au roi Jacques: accorde-nous la liberté que tu prends pour toi-même, et je n'en serai pas moins votre véritable ami.

ROUSSEAU'S REPLY

M. H. Tronchin (6 Juin 1759), *Annales.*

"Vous me soulagez beaucoup, monsieur, en m'apprenant sur quoi vous fondez les accusations que vous intentez contre moi; je pense trop bien de votre jugement et je ne trouve pas vos raisons assez solides pour croire que la conclusion que vous en tirez soit sérieuse. Vous me reprochez de m'être détaché de tous mes amis; vous vous trompez, monsieur; il est vrai que je me suis détaché de quelques personnes, mais très-certainement je n'ai pas perdu un seul ami.

"Vous citez en particulier l'Aristarque dont je parle dans la préface de mon dernier écrit. Vous rapportez mon passage et vous demandez si vous avez besoin d'autre argument pour prouver que vous n'avez pas tort. Je ne sais pas comment vous l'entendez, mais pour moi je n'en ai pas besoin d'autre pour prouver que vous avez tort.

"Car enfin, par quel étrange tour d'esprit pouvez-vous conclure que je hais les hommes du regret que je montre

d'être forcé de n'en plus aimer un ? A qui tenait-il que vous ne vissiez dans ce passage un cœur aimant et sensible auquel il en coûte quand il est forcé de se détacher ? Pourquoi ne disiez-vous pas ; il faut que des raisons bien graves le déterminent à combattre ainsi sa propre inclination ? Ce raisonnement est si naturel que tout le monde l'a fait hors vous, et il sera toujours fort singulier que vous ayez tiré le préjugé de ma haine contre les hommes du même écrit qui en a guéri le public. Vous examinez ensuite les raisons que vous supposez m'avoir détaché de cet ami prétendu. Vous me faites dire qu'il avait des défauts ; eh ! tant mieux, monsieur, il était homme, il lui en fallait beaucoup pour me convenir ; je ne voudrais pas d'un être parfait pour mon ami, car je veux reconnaître dans mon ami, mon semblable. Vous me reprochez d'avoir été son juge et sa partie ; voilà qui est bizarre, et qui voulez-vous donc qui juge si un ami me convient ou ne me convient pas ? Si je l'accusais de quelque crime, ce ne serait pas à moi de le juger, je le sais ; mais par ma foi, quant à la convenance des cœurs, il me semble qu'il faut être partie pour être juge. Me voilà donc, selon vous, monsieur, détaché de tous mes amis. Que s'en suit-il ; que je suis détaché des hommes ? Tout au contraire, car ce sont presque toujours les préférences qui nuisent à l'humanité ; trois ou quatre personnes concentrées entre elles ne se soucient guère du reste de l'Univers, et il s'en faut peu qu'on se fasse honneur d'une injustice qui tourne au profit de son ami. Mais un cœur qui s'étend avec plaisir sur ses semblables est moins prompt à former des attachements particuliers et plus modéré dans ses attachements. O combien il faut de vertu pour concilier la justice avec l'amitié et savoir être ami sans cesser d'être homme ! Je suis fâché que vous me fassiez un crime de m'oser autant présumer de moi.

" Tout ce que vous m'apprenez sur de mes concitoyens a réjoui mon cœur. Combien j'ai du plaisir de m'être trompé et avec quelle joie je me reproche mon injustice ! Mais,

Monsieur, ce n'est pas assez pour m'attirer parmi eux, plus je leur dois d'estime, plus leur bienveillance me serait chère, et plus il me serait dur de n'en pas jouir. Vous ne voudriez pas que je vous crusse un des moins biens disposés pour moi, or, à juger des autres par vous et de vos sentiments par vos lettres, je ne vois pas que j'en doive attendre de personne de fort obligeants dans ma patrie.

"Je ne dis pas que j'aie mérité mieux, je dis seulement que cette sévérité, quoique juste, me serait trop dure à supporter. Si tel est mon sort, que j'aie à trouver partout de la haine ou de l'indifférence, je la supporterai plus aisément des étrangers que de mes concitoyens. J'avoue même que je trouve ici plus d'indulgence que je n'en mérite. Je n'ai pas lieu d'en espérer autant à Genève ; à tout prendre, je trouverai mieux mon compte à être jugé par ceux qui ont vu ma conduite, et il n'en coûte point à un honnête homme de mourir où il a vécu."

TRONCHIN'S ANSWER

M. H. Tronchin, *Annales*

"Quand on souhaite d'avoir tort, il est bien doux, mon cher monsieur, d'être condamné. J'avais craint, mais je me suis trompé, que la douceur de l'amitié manquait au bonheur de votre vie. Vous n'imaginez pas combien je suis content de m'être trompé, car je ne crains point pour vous ce qui n'est à redouter que pour le commun des hommes, je suis sûr de vos principes comme des miens. L'affection qu'il nous est permis d'avoir pour quelques individus ne détruira point celle que nous devons à la société dont nous sommes membres, et au genre humain, dont chaque société fait partie.

"La douceur légitimement attachée à l'amitié particulière devient pour nous la récompense de la bienveillance générale, et ce n'est qu'à cette condition que nous pouvons dire avec Cicéron que la véritable amitié est de toutes les choses la plus excellente, qui l'est dans toutes

les saisons et dans tous les états de la vie et nous en concluons *nihil melius homini a diis immortalibus datum.* L'abus donc de l'amitié ne vous effrayera point. Dirions-nous que le vin est un poison parce que ceux qui en boivent trop s'enivrent, ou que la religion est une mauvaise chose, parce que plus d'une fois elle a servi de prétexte à la vengeance ?

" Qui celui dont les liaisons particulières se forment et s'entretiennent aux dépens de la bienfaisance générale rentre en soi-même et s'examine. Il découvrira dans son cœur quelque vice secret qui fait que le sentiment le plus doux, le plus naturel et le plus innocent dégénère. Lorsque quatre personnes concentrées se soucieront peu du reste de l'Univers, est-ce à leur amitié qu'il faut s'en prendre ? Non sans doute, c'est un vice du cœur et un défaut de principe.

" Commençons donc par rectifier notre cœur et par nous faire des principes ; ils nous attacheront à cette chaîne invisible qui nous lie à tous nos semblables, et nous n'aimerons point l'individu aux dépens de l'espèce, car le plus grand de nos devoirs est d'aimer tous les hommes. Et qui doute qu'il faille de la vertu pour concilier l'amitié avec la justice, et savoir être ami sans cesser d'être homme. Eh bien, ayons de la vertu, peut-on être bon et heureux sans elle ?

" Je suis charmé, mon cher ami, que ce que je vous ai dit de vos concitoyens ait réjoui votre cœur. Il avait besoin de ce lénitif, mais je n'aime pas les conséquences que vous en tirez. Quoi ! parce qu'ils méritent votre estime, parce que leur bienveillance vous est chère, vous craignez de n'en pas jouir ? Vous les croyez donc bien injustes et s'ils le sont comment pouvez-vous les estimer ? Mais vous me dites une chose qui me fait encore plus de peine et qui me prouve bien que vous ne lisez pas mes lettres. Ce n'est pas ce qui m'afflige le plus, elles n'en valent pas la peine et si je vous en parle ce n'est que pour me justifier, je ne vous dirai pas de les relire, on ne conserve pas des lettres qu'on ne lit point. Faites-

moi la grâce de faire attention qu'en jugeant de mes sentiments par mes lettres, vous ne pouvez pas douter que je m'intéresse à vous et que l'amitié la plus vraie me dicte tout ce que je vous dis. D'autres y mettraient peut-être un peu plus de compliments, mais je crois que les compliments ne sont pas faits pour vous. Ils sont d'ailleurs peu conformes à mon caractère, car si je ne suis pas toujours obligé de dire tout ce que je pense, je dois penser tout ce que je dis. Je voudrais partager avec vous la douceur de ma vie ; cela s'appelle-t-il de la haine ou de l'indifférence ? Jugez-en vous même, mon bon ami."

ROUSSEAU'S REPLY

M. H. Tronchin, *Annales.*

"Quoi, monsieur, je vous ai offensé ! Ce n' était assurément pas mon intention, et je crois que cela devait se voir dans ma lettre: mais vous m'accusez injustement, il faut bien que je me défende. Vous pouviez savoir que je n'ai qu'un ton même avec les Français qui donnent tant de valeur aux mots ; en changer avec vous n'eut-ce pas été véritablement vous offenser ?

"Je vous ai dit en termes durs des choses honnêtes. Vous aviez fait tout le contraire. Qui de nous avait plus lieu de se plaindre ? Vous m'aviez accusé d'indifférence pour les hommes, ajoutant que vous vous serviez du mot le plus doux. Monsieur, si les mots sont doux, le sens ne l'est guère. Cette accusation non motivée m'a fourni la comparaison qui vous a déplu ; cependant en me la reprochant, vous ne vous en justifiez pas, et il me reste toujours à savoir sur quoi vous fondez la haine dont vous me taxez contre le genre humain. Vous me trouvez la morale d'un malade et à vous celle d'un homme en bonne santé. Cela peut être ; mais vous m'écrivez comme à un homme robuste et vous voulez que je vous réponde comme à un infirme. Alors vous n'êtes pas conséquent.

"Eh! mon cher monsieur, à quoi nous amusons-nous la? Laissons les femmes et les jeunes gens épiloguer sur les mots, et tâchons d'être plus sages. Vous pourriez m'écrire des injures et je pourrais vous en répondre d'autres, que je n'en aurais pas moins d'estime pour vous et je n'en compterais pas moins sur celle que vous me devez; car je sais qu'il faut juger les hommes sur ce qu'ils font et non pas sur ce qu'ils disent.

"Adieu, mon cher philosophe, je vous aime, je vous honore et vous embrasse de tout mon cœur.[1]

"Rousseau."

TRONCHIN'S LAST LETTER, WHICH ROUSSEAU DID NOT ANSWER

Streckeisen-Moultou.

"Je ne me rappelle pas mot pour mot ce que je vous disais, mon cher monsieur, dans ma dernière lettre, mais je suis bien sûr que je ne vous ai rien dit de malhonnête ou de dur. L'esprit qui l'a dictée est le même qui dicte celle-ci; j'espère qu'il sera toujours le même tant que je me porterai bien, car qui sait mieux que moi qu'il dépend de l'état du corps, souvent sans qu'il s'en aperçoive. J'en ai fait quelquefois l'expérience en moi-même, et mon état m'a mis à même de la faire très-fréquemment dans les autres. Je la fais avec vous, mon bon ami, quand vous me dites 'que ma manière de procéder ne ressemble pas mal à celle dont on use dans l'interrogatoire des infortunés qu'on défère à l'inquisition,' quand vous me parlez 'de délateurs secrets qui vous accusent et des mémoires sur lesquels je vous juge sans vous entendre,' moi qui ne vous ai jamais rien dit et qui n'ai jamais rien pensé que d'honnête et de tendre à votre égard, moi qui n'ai jamais ouï de délateurs secrets, ni vu de mémoires à votre charge, moi qui voudrais adoucir vos maux et partager avec vous l'innocence et

[1] MSS. Tronchin, Rousseau à Tronchin, 30 mai 1759, inédite.

la douceur de ma vie, moi qui ai fait tout ce qui était en mon pouvoir, et qui suis prêt de le faire encore, pour vous attirer dans votre patrie et pour y passer avec vous des jours calmes et sereins, moi enfin qui ne fais de cas que de la vertu et des hommes vertueux. Oh ! mon cher ami, vous avez blessé mon âme et mon âme n'avait pas mérité la plus petite plaie, mais que dis-je, la plaie que vous lui avez faite n'est qu'une preuve de sa faiblesse ; vous n'êtes pas coupable, mais je suis trop sensible, et je devrais ne le pas être, puisque je me porte bien, et que je n'ai rien à me reprocher. Si vous vous portiez aussi bien, mon bon ami, l'encre dont vous servez serait moins noire, les malveillants que vous supposez disparaîtraient, vous ne vous reprocheriez point les éloges que vous avez donnés à votre patrie, vous n'imagineriez point qu'elle n'en est pas digne, vous ne vous feriez pas une si triste idée de ses mœurs, vous ne penseriez pas à fuir, pour en perdre le souvenir, vous n'aimeriez pas mieux vivre parmi les Français qu'avec vos concitoyens, vous sauriez qu'ils préfèrent encore un homme vertueux à tous les beaux esprits du monde, et vous vous diriez à vous-même que je ne suis point fait pour honorer votre patrie, et qu'elle n'est pas faite pour que vous la pleuriez. Les citoyens qu'elle renferme dans son sein ne sont pas des hommes parfaits ; mais où en trouve-t-on, vous et moi le sommes-nous, mon bon ami, et pouvons-nous espérer de l'être ? je dis plus, si nous l'étions, pourrions-nous espérer de l'être toujours ? Une fièvre tierce mal guérie, le plus petit dérangement de l'organe qui sert à la secretion de la bile, la plus légère altération de notre cerveau, ne peut-elle pas ébranler l'édifice de notre sagesse et nous rendre dans un instant plus petits et plus faibles que ceux dont nous plaignons la faiblesse et la petitesse ? La plus profonde humilité est le seul état qui convient à l'homme. Les héros sont des fous ou des forcenés. Les philosophes extravaguent. Les beaux esprits me font pitié. Il n'y a d'homme respectable que celui qui est pénétré de sa

petitesse et de la grandeur de Dieu. Táchons de l'être, mon bon ami, et conduisons-nous de façon que nous puissions attendre la mort sans la désirer ni la craindre."

Here the correspondence ended, for Rousseau did not answer this letter. Can any one maintain he ought to have done so? Or is there any doubt, when we compare the tones and arguments of these letters, on which side lay the arrogance, veiled malice, and injustice?

The proofs that Tronchin having ceased to profess the belief that Jean Jacques "knew, loved, and served virtue," worked actively and incessantly with Grimm and Diderot, to represent him as a sophist and a demagogue; to get him hunted out of Switzerland, as he had been driven out of France; and to rob him, by methods of calumny, of powerful protectors, and of popular sympathy in his misfortunes, are supplied in the summary given in the *Annales* of his actions and writings during the epoch of Rousseau's persecutions.

Immediately after the condemnation of *Emile* and of the *Contrat Social* by the Parliament of Paris, we find the Doctor Tronchin and his family on the alert to keep the authorities at Geneva informed of the example it behoves them to follow.

"L'orage se déchaîne contre le livre," writes M. Henri Tronchin, "neuf jours après l'arrêt du Parlement de Paris, le Petit Conseil de Genève, sur le réquisitoire du Procureur général Tronchin, fait brûler à son tour, le 19 juin, le *Contrat* et l'*Emile*. Jean-Jacques est décrété de prise de corps.

Tronchin mande encore à son fils :[1]

"Le *Contrat Social* et le livre de l'*Education* de Rousseau ont été brûlés ici comme à Paris, par la main du bourreau. Le voilà fugitif de Montmorency à Yverdun, et d'Yverdun à St-Aubin près de Neuchâtel, en attendant qu'on l'en chasse, car M^rs^ de Berne ainsi que la France et que nous lui ont défendu leur territoire. Je ne sais pas où on le supportera, car il a employé tout son esprit

[1] MSS. Tronchin, Lettre du 5 juin 1762, inédite.

à ruiner de fond en comble les constitutions politiques et la religion chrétienne. Les principes qu'il pose sont très dangereux. C'est un *fanatique atrabilaire* d'autant plus à craindre qu'il écrit on ne peut pas mieux. On a craint pendant plusieurs jours que le jugement du Conseil n'excitât des troubles, car il y a ici bien des fanatiques aussi fanatiques que lui. Il a paru une lettre anonyme en sa faveur, qui a d'abord fait beaucoup d'impression, mais les bons propos des têtes sages l'ont insensiblement effacée. La conduite de M^rs^ de Berne y a beaucoup contribué. Il est bien cruel que l'esprit et l'éloquence de cet homme n'aboutissent qu'à soutenir des paradoxes et à troubler la société."

"Dès la première heure, Tronchin ne se dissimule pas l'étendue du danger, sachant fort bien que les semences révolutionnaires jetées par Jean-Jacques trouveront un terrain tout préparé pour les recevoir. Il prévoit que la Genève dont il se sentait fier, la Genève aux fortes traditions, jalouse de rester telle que l'avait faite la piété des ancêtres, sera désormais 'le jouet des sophistes politiques trompant le peuple avec d'autant plus de facilité que ceux qui pourraient l'éclairer sont naturellement l'objet de sa défiance.' 'Ce *misérable Rousseau*,' écrit-il à son fils, 'a porté le poison dans le cœur de nos concitoyens, le poison germera toujours. Il a mis sa mèche sur nos barils de poudre.'"

"Aussi Tronchin fut-il à Genève *un ardent partisan de la résistance aux idées de Rousseau*. Appelé, deux jours après la condamnation de l'*Emile*, à prononcer dans la cathédrale 'le Discours Académique' à la cérémonie des Promotions,[1] *il saisit cette occasion pour* s'élever contre le poison de l'impureté et de l'impiété semé par le moyen de l'imprimerie et qui infecte maintenant les âmes des jeunes gens. 'C'est contre cet

[1] On appelle "Promotions" à Genève la cérémonie annuelle dans laquelle on décerne les récompenses aux élèves du collège.—Les Promotions eurent lieu cette année-là le 21 juin. V. Rivoire, *Bibliographie historique de Genève au XVIII^e^ siècle*, t. I, p. 113.

abus,' s'écrie-t-il, 'que la sagesse mâle des Pères de la Patrie *a hier encore pris des précautions.*[1] . . . Plût à Dieu que je pusse aujourd'hui, dans ce lieu consacré à la vérité, vous élever un autel, monument de la reconnaissance publique. . . . Recevez mes actions de grâce, gardiens vigilants de la République, Pères de la Patrie.'

"Et il écrit à Grimm, à propos de la déclaration de foi qui Rousseau avait envoyée de Môtiers au pasteur de Montmollin pour obtenir son admission à la Sainte Cène :

" 'Jean-Jacques a fait une espèce de rétractation qui est pitoyable et qui ferme la bouche de ses plus zélés dévots. Il prétend n'avoir jamais rien dit contre le christianisme, il soutient qu'il n'a argumenté que contre la religion catholique romaine et qu'il est par conséquent très-bon chrétien. Le plus mauvais tour qu'on put lui jouer serait de publier cette rétractation. Comme il y en a nombre de copies, cela pourrait bien lui arriver.' "

"Tronchin redoutait cependant que les amis de Rousseau missent à profit cette déclaration, pour ramener à Genève un homme dont il estimait les doctrines funestres pour ses concitoyens. *Ayant appris que Moultou défendait Jean-Jacques dans ses discours, le docteur lui fit insinuer qu'il serait plus sage de se taire.*

" 'Pour moi,' écrit-il à son fils, 'qui ai vécu avec Rousseau et[2] qui le connais, je ne suis ni ne serai jamais sa dupe. . . . C'est grand dommage que cet homme n'ait que l'appareil de la vertu, et c'est ce qui explique comment ayant vécu dans l'impureté et ayant eu plusieurs enfants d'une concubine, il les a tous exposés. Quiconque peut manquer au premier sentiment de la nature tient bien faiblement à tous les autres.'

"Et il mande à Grimm, à propos de l'abdication de Rousseau à ses droits de citoyen :

[1] When condemning *Emile* to be burnt.

[2] Tronchin had spent some afternoons at Montmorency in 1756.

" ' Cet étrange homme, n'est ni bon chrétien, ni citoyen ni père. Qu'est-il donc ? Le plus malheureux de tous les hommes, qui comptait l'autre jour parmi les charges de sa vie l'entretien de la vieille Levasseur. Il l'a dit très distinctement à son ami M. Moultou, qui le racontait encore hier chez Madame d'Anville. Vous savez ce qui en est. Il a aussi protesté à ce même M. Moultou sur tout ce qu'il y a de plus sacré qu'il n'a jamais eu d'enfants, et que ce qu'on en a dit est une calomnie. Vous savez aussi ce qui en est. Oh ! que cet homme joue un rôle difficile. Encore une fois qu'il est malheureux.' "

" L'abdication de Rousseau fut, on le sait, le point de départ de graves évènements à Genève. Blâmé par ceux mêmes qui lui étaient restés fidèles, Jean-Jacques pour se justifier fit répandre dans la ville des copies de sa Lettre au Conseil. Les esprits s'échauffèrent; *quarante bourgeois*[1] sous la conduite de De Luc adressèrent au Petit Conseil une " Représentation " fondée sur ce que le Consistoire n'avait pas été consulté avant la condamnation de l'*Emile* et demandant, en conséquence, que le jugement fût rapporté.

Tronchin écrit encore á son fils :

" Nous avons eu ici un commencement d'orage. . . Tu sais que Rousseau a abdiqué sa bourgeoisie. C'était le comble de l'orgueil. Non content de cette démarche, pour se venger de sa patrie il a voulu la troubler. Il y a formé un parti qu'il a engagé à faire des représentations au Conseil aussi injustes que séditieuses. De Luc, à la tête de ce parti, a séduit le plus grand nombre de ses concitoyens ; mais le Conseil s'est si bien comporté et a répondu avec tant de sagesse et de force que Rousseau et De Luc sont restés couverts de honte. . . . On a de Rousseau deux lettres écrites le même jour, l'une à Moultou, où il prêche la paix et la concorde, l'autre à Marc Chappuis, où il encourage à l'émeute, et se plaint

[1] No: six-hundred citizens united themselves, under de Luc's direction, in this manifestation conducted with perfect legality and order.

de ce qu'on a tant tardé, et puis, fiez-vous aux hommes ! . . ."

Le débat s'élargit. Les Représentants ne se bornaient plus à protester contre l'illégalité d'un jugement, ils en vinrent à discuter "le droit de veto" du Gouvernement et à réclamer la convocation d'un Conseil Général, seul juge, à leurs veux, des points contestés.

C'est à Jean-Robert Tronchin que le gouvernement, chaque jour plus menacé depuis la condamnation des ouvrages de Rousseau, confia le soin de défendre ses droits de justifier sa conduite. Le Procureur général s'en acquitta dans une brochure anonyme intitulée : *Lettres écrites de la campagne.*[1] Cette éloquente apologie de la Constitution parut calmer les esprits. "C'est peut-être," écrivait Grimm, "le premier exemple de l'empire de la raison sur un peuple échauffé par des cabaleurs."[2] Mais ce ne fut qu'une courte trêve, car Rousseau riposta aux *Lettres de la campagne* par ses fameuses *Lettres de la montagne,* qui mirent le feu aux quatre coins de Genève.

"Je ne suis point surpris," écrit le docteur à Madame Necker, "que vous n'ayez pas pu lire les lettres de l'incendiaire. *Son ton inhumain* n'est pas fait pour vous. . . . Il a écrit pour les démons de Milton, qui, après avoir été chassés du ciel maudissaient les dieux. *C'est un démon plus démon qu'eux.*"[3]

L'agitation allait croissant à Genève. Le premier dimanche de janvier 1765, lors de l'élection des magistrats, les partisans de Rousseau s'efforcèrent sans y réussir de faire échouer le scrutin. *Tronchin, qui accuse Jean-Jacques d'avoir été l'instigateur de cette manœuvre,* écrit à son fils :

"Ce malheureux Rousseau, pour se venger de sa patrie, *a failli la renverser.* Le jour de l'élection des syndics,

[1] Les *Lettres écrites de la campagne* parurent à la fin de septembre 1763, la 5e dans les derniers jours d'octobre.

[2] *Corresp. Litt.,* 1er décembre 1763.

[3] Archives de Coppet. Lettre du '18 février 1765, inédite.

nous nous sommes vus sur le point de n'avoir plus de gouvernement. Cinq ou six jours auparavant, il a fait paraître un ouvrage [1] qui l'ébranlait jusque dans ses fondements. Cet ouvrage a tellement échauffé les têtes de plus de six cents bourgeois, que l'Etat a été sur le point de périr. Le coup a manqué. Je ne sais pas encore comment tout ceci finira, mais ce que je sais bien, c'est que *Rousseau est un scélérat.*" [2]

Le Petit Conseil se sentait, suivant ses propres expressions, "découragé, sans force et sans moyens pour continuer ses fonctions." Il adressa un manifeste au peuple et offrit d'abdiquer. Cette proposition, en effrayant la bourgeoisie, qui vit Genève à deux doigts de l'anarchie, eut pour conséquence d'opérer une réaction dans l'opinion publique en faveur des magistrats.

"Ce *misérable Rousseau,*" écrit Tronchin à son fils, "*est actuellement l'objet du mépris et de la haine publique.* Le corps entier des citoyens a fait de la manière la plus solennelle sa soumission au Conseil, et l'a assuré publiquement de son respect, de son amour et de sa confiance. Le Conseil a publié une déclaration pleine de dignité et de force. Tu l'auras lue dans la *Gazette d'Amsterdam,* où je l'ai fait insérer." [3]

A vrai dire, tout en protestant de son attachement au gouvernement, la bourgeoisie faisait certaines réserves et persistait à demander la révision du procès de Rousseau. Néanmoins, croyant la bataille gagnée, le Petit Conseil n'hésita pas à flétrir dans sa déclaration les *Lettres de la Montagne,* "ce livre enfanté par le délire et la haine." Cette flétrissure exaspéra Rousseau, mais un coup autrement douloureux venait de le frapper. Un libelle anonyme : *Le sentiment des citoyens,* l'accusait d'avoir outragé avec fureur la religion chrétienne et ses ministres,

[1] Les *Lettres écrites de la montagne* s'étaient répandues à Genève dans le courant de décembre 1764.

[2] MSS. Tronchin. Lettre du 19 janvier 1765, inédite.

[3] MSS. Tronchin. Lettre du 15 février 1765, inédite.

de n'être qu'un vil séditieux, et apprenait au monde entier que l'homme qui s'était posé comme le réformateur de l'humanité traînait à sa suite la malheureuse créature dont il avait " abjurant tous les sentiments de la nature, exposé les enfants à la porte d'un hôpital."

" Cet homme," s'écrie Tronchin, " est un grand malheureux. Ce masque de vertu sous lequel il avait caché sa face catilinaire est arraché. Le méchant se montre à découvert, le méchant est démasqué, ses noirs projets sont au grand jour. Il en sera la dupe, mais en attendant, nos magistrats sont bien à plaindre et tous les honnêtes gens le sont avec eux." [1]

Jean-Jacques attribua immédiatement ce libelle au pasteur Vernes avec lequel il s'était brouillé. " M. Vernes s'est justifié," écrit le docteur à Madame Necker, " mais Rousseau ne veut rien faire pour effacer sa calomnie. Cela s'appelle maintenir l'unité de son action." [2]

Est-il besoin de rappeler que l'auteur du *Sentiment des citoyens*, c'est Voltaire, Voltaire qui, jetant l'huile sur le feu, pressait le Conseil d'agir contre le livre séditieux de la Montagne " comme on agit contre un perturbateur du repos public," et qui écrivait à Tronchin :

"Esculape était peint avec un serpent à ses pieds. C'était apparemment quelque Jean-Jacques qui voulait lui mordre le talon. Il faut avouer que ce malheureux est un monstre, et cependant, s'il avait besoin de vos secours, vous lui en donneriez. Quelle différence, grand Dieu, d'un Tronchin à un Jean-Jacques."

Le *Sentiment des citoyens* vint grossir l'orage que Les *Lettres de la Montagne* avait déchaîné sur Jean-Jacques. Invectivé en pleine église par le pasteur de Montmollin, naguère son protecteur et son ami, lapidé par la population de Môtier, expulsé de l'Ile Saint-Pierre où il s'était réfugié, Rousseau se rendit à Strasbourg. Il gagna de

[1] MSS. Tronchin. Tronchin à son fils, 16 mars 1765, inédit.
[2] Archives de Coppet. Lettre du 18 février 1765, inédite.

là Paris, puis ne trouvant plus en France qu'un asile mal assuré, se détermina à passer en Angleterre avec Hume, dont il acceptait l'hospitalité, Jean-Jacques quittait Paris au moment même où Tronchin venait s'y fixer.

Mais la confiante amitié que Rousseau témoignait à Hume devait être de courte durée, et bientôt tout lui paraît fourberie chez son protecteur. Il en vient à accuser celui qu'il appelait le meilleur des hommes de s'être transformé dans le plus noir ; le délire de la persécution le hante, réveillé dans son cerveau malade par la présence à Londres de François Tronchin, le fils du docteur.

En apprenant, quelques mois plus tard, la publicité que Jean-Jacques donne à sa rupture avec Hume, les accusations odieuses et extravagantes qu'il dirige contre son bienfaiteur, Tronchin mande de Paris à son cousin Jacob Tronchin :

" L'aventure de Rousseau avec David Hume a fait ici un bruit prodigieux. Il n'y conserve pas un seul ami, Mesdames de Luxembourg, de Beauvau et de Boufflers, ses bonnes amies, l'ont abandonné. On n'en parle plus que comme *d'un méchant coquin.* Il n'y a qu'une voix là-dessus. Jamais homme n'a été coulé plus rapidement à fond. J'ai observé le plus grand sang-froid toutes les fois qu'on en a parlé. Ces trois femmes qui étaient hier soir ici, m'avouèrent qu'elles en avaient été étonnées. Voltaire perd aussi beaucoup. L'asile qu'il demande au roi de Prusse indigne les indifférents et fait pitié à ses amis."

Et il écrit à son fils :

" On dirait à en juger par les procédés que Rousseau a eus vis-à-vis de David Hume, qu'il veut s'ensevelir sous les ruines de la plus noire ingratitude. Il lui fait un crime de l'amitié qu'il t'a témoignée, parce que tu es, dit-il, le fils de son plus cruel ennemi. Tous mes torts se réduisent pourtant à lui avoir reproché qu'il a exposé ses

cinq enfants.[1] Crois-tu que je doive en rougir? Cet homme est un charlatan de vertu et je n'aime point les charlatans. . . ."

Est-il besoin de rappeler que Voltaire avait poussé Hume à publier sa défense et signalé avec une perfidie sans pareille aux Médiateurs le moyen de "degrader" Jean-Jacques en fouillant dans son passé? Loin d'user de générosité envers son infortuné adversaire, Voltaire se targue de l'avoir trop ménagé jusqu'ici, l'accable de ses sarcasmes les plus sanglants, accole à son nom les épithètes les plus outrageantes.

Il écrit la *Lettre à Hume*, afin de prouver que Jean-Jacques était "le plus méchant coquin qui ait jamais deshonoré la littérature." Peu de temps après parais-soient, sous le couvert de l'anonyme, les *Notes sur la lettre de M. de Voltaire à Hume.*

"Puisqu'il est permis," conclut l'auteur de ce libelle, "à un Diogène subalterne et manqué d'appeler 'jongleur' le premier médecin de Monseigneur le duc d'Orléans, un médecin qui a été son ami, qui l'a visité, traité, qui a été au rang de ses bienfaiteurs, il est permis à un ami de M. Tronchin de faire voir ce que c'est que le personnage qui ose l'insulter. On peut sur le fumier où il est couché et où il grince des dents contre le genre humain, lui jeter du pain s'il en a besoin; mais il a fallu le faire connaître, et mettre ceux qui peuvent le nourrir à l'abri de ses morsures."

Voltaire désavoua cet "ignoble pamphlet," mais dans une lettre à Damilaville, il désigne l'auteur comme "un homme très au fait des évènements, habitant Paris,

[1] No letter of Tronchin's reproaching Rousseau for exposing his children has ever been produced; and if he knew that this charge was made against the man to whom he wrote the letters that have been quoted, he was himself a hypocrite when he professed in his last effusion that he had never had any but "honest and tender sentiments towards him"; and that he desired to "share with him the 'innocence and sweetness' of his own existence."

intime ami de Tronchin," et laisse entendre que ce dernier a les preuves en main des menées de Jean-Jacques contre les Délices. Quelles étaient ces preuves? Tronchin n'y fait aucune allusion dans sa correspondance."

This commentary upon the Doctor Tronchin's behaviour towards Rousseau in the character of his incessant persecutor and calumniator winds up in *Les Annales de la Société de Jean-Jacques* with an observation which is very mysterious, unless it signifies in M. Henri Tronchin a subtle sense of humour.

—"Rousseau," affirms the writer—"en a agi avec Tronchin comme envers ses autres amis, dont il s'exagère l'hostilité; et auxquels il prête des motifs de haine, qui n'existent que dans son imagination!"

NOTE II

"On a de Rousseau deux lettres écrites le même jour, l'une à Moultou, où il prêche la paix el la concorde; l'autre à Marc Chappuis, où il encourage à l'émeute et se plaint de ce qu'on a tout tardé."—Tronchin.

"Il écrivait dans la même semaine deux lettres à Genève par l'une desquelles il exhortait ses concitoyens à la paix, et par l'autre soufflait dans leurs esprits la vengeance et la révolte."—Diderot, *Essai sur Sénèque.*

The method of testing the truth of this libel is to state the facts; and to give the documents which establish the truth of the statement. On the 12th May 1763, Rousseau wrote to the First Syndic of the Republic of Geneva, resigning his rights and title as a citizen. On the 21st May he wrote to Marc Chappuis, who had professed great admiration for him, telling him about this abdication. He received in reply a very harsh letter of reproof, severely condemning this action as unpatriotic and unjust; and asking in what way his fellow citizens

were to blame for the action of their Government? Rousseau replied to this letter on the 26th May, that when the Government passed judgment and the citizens accepted the decree without using their legal right of protest, they associated themselves in this judgment. On the 23rd June Rousseau heard from his friend Moultou that Chappuis had shown this letter to the magistrates, and that it was described as the tocsin of revolt; and on the same day he also received a letter from Marc Chappuis, complaining that he (Rousseau) must have sent an incorrect copy of this same letter to Geneva, inasmuch as Moultou had complained to him that false copies were being circulated, and had asked to see Rousseau's original letter. Before answering Chappuis, Rousseau wrote to Moultou for information. Moultou replied that he had seen, at the Duchess d'Enville's, a copy of the letter, that was altered in such a way as to make Rousseau's reflection on the neglect of the bourgeoisie to use their rights of protest when the sentence was passed against him, an assertion that they had a legal right to upset the sentence even now. Moultou added that this phrase had been made an excuse by Deluc, one of the most indiscreet as well as one of the most enthusiastic of Rousseau's partisans, to give a more violent character to the demonstrations in his favour: and he advised Rousseau to write to Deluc and urge him to avoid any disturbance of order. Rousseau responded at once to this suggestion; and wrote to Deluc in the most emphatic and uncompromising tone, assuring him that only mischief could come of these manifestations now; that they had ceased to be either legal or useful; and that for his part he had solemnly pledged himself that no revocation of the sentence would induce him either to revisit Geneva or to resume his title of citizenship.

Here, now, are the documents showing that we have here the correct explanation of this incident; and that the charge made by Tronchin and by Diderot was a calumny.

ROUSSEAU'S TWO FIRST LETTERS TO—

M. MARC CHAPPUIS

"*Motiers, le* 21 *mai* 1763.

"Vous verrez, monsieur, je le présume, la lettre que j'écris à M. le premier syndic. Plaignez-moi, vous qui connoissez mon cœur, d'être forcé de faire une démarche qui le déchire. Mais après les affronts que j'ai reçus dans ma patrie, et qui ne sont ni ne peuvent être réparés, m'en reconnoître encore membre seroit consentir à mon déshonneur. Je ne vous ai point écrit, monsieur, durant mes disgrâces : les malheureux doivent être discrets. Maintenant que tout ce qui peut m'arriver de bien et de mal est à peu près arrivé, je me livre tout entier aux sentiments qui me plaisent et me consolent ; et soyez persuadé, monsieur, je vous supplie, que ceux qui m'attachent à vous ne s'affoibliront jamais."

AU MÊME

"*Motiers, le* 26 *mai* 1763.

"Je vois, monsieur, par la lettre dont vous m'avez honoré le 18 de ce mois, que vous me jugez bien légèrement dans mes disgrâces. Il en coûte si peu d'accabler les malheureux, qu'on est presque toujours disposé à leur faire un crime de leur malheur.

"Vous dites que vous ne comprenez rien à ma démarche, elle est pourtant aussi claire que la triste nécessité qui m'y a réduit. Flétri publiquement dans ma patrie sans que personne ait réclamé contre cette flétrissure, après dix mois d'attente j'ai dû prendre le seul parti propre à conserver mon honneur si cruellement offensé. C'est avec la plus vive douleur que je m'y suis déterminé : mais que pouvois-je faire ? Demeurer volontairement membre de l'état après ce qui s'etoit passé, n'étoit-ce pas consentir à mon déshonneur ?

"Je ne comprends point comment vous m'osez demander ce que m'a fait la patrie. Un homme aussi éclairé que vous ignore-t-il que toute démarche publique faite par le magistrat est censée faite par tout l'état, lorsque aucun de ceux qui ont droit de la désavouer ne la désavoue ? Quand le gouvernement parle et que tous les citoyens se taisent, apprenez que la patrie a parlé.

"Je ne dois pas seulement compte de moi aux Genevois, je le dois encore à moi-même, au public, dont j'ai le malheur d'être connu, et à la postérité, de qui je le serai peut-être. Si j'étois assez sot pour vouloir persuader au reste de l'Europe que les Genevois ont désapprouvé la procédure de leurs magistrats, ne s'y moqueroit-on pas de moi ? Ne savons-nous pas, me diroit-on, que la bourgeoisie a droit de faire des représentations dans toutes les occasions où elle croit les lois lésées et où elle improuve la conduite des magistrats ? Qu'a-t-elle fait ici depuis près d'un an que vous avez attendu ? Si cinq ou six bourgeois seulement eussent protesté, l'on pourroit vous croire sur les sentiments que vous leur prêtez. Cette démarche étoit facile, légitime ; elle ne troubloit point l'ordre public: pourquoi donc ne l'a-t-on pas faite ? Le silence de tous ne dément-il pas vos assertions ? Montrez-nous les signes du désaveu que vous leur prêtez. Voilà, monsieur, ce qu'on me diroit et qu'on auroit raison de me dire. On ne juge point les hommes par leurs pensées, on les juge sur leurs actions.

"Il y avoit peut-être divers moyens de me venger de l'outrage, mais il n'y en avoit qu'un de le repousser sans vengeance ; et c'est celui que j'ai pris. Ce moyen, qui ne fait de mal qu'à moi, doit-il m'attirer des reproches au lieu des consolations que je devois espérer ?

"Vous dites que je n'avois pas droit de demander l'abdication de ma bourgeoisie : mais le dire n'est pas le prouver. Nous sommes bien loin de compte ; car je n'ai point prétendu demander cette abdication, mais la donner. J'ai assez étudié mes droits pour les connoître, quoique je ne les aie exercés qu'une fois seulement et

pour les abdiquer. Ayant pour moi l'usage de tous les peuples, l'autorité de la raison, du droit naturel, de Grotius, de tous les jurisconsultes, et même l'aveu du conseil, je ne suis pas obligé de me régler sur votre erreur. Chacun sait que tout pacte dont une des parties enfreint les conditions devient nul pour l'autre. Quand je devois tout à la patrie, ne me devoit-elle rien ? J'ai payé ma dette ; a-t-elle payé la sienne ? On n'a jamais droit de la déserter, je l'avoue ; mais, quand elle nous rejette, on a toujours droit de la quitter ; on le peut dans les cas que j'ai spécifiés, et même on le doit dans le mien. Le serment que j'ai fait envers elle, elle l'a fait envers moi. En violant ses engagements, elle m'affranchit des miens ; et, en me les rendant ignominieux, elle me fait un devoir d'y renoncer.

"Vous dites que si des citoyens se présentoient au conseil pour demander pareille chose, vous ne seriez pas surpris qu'on les incarcérât. Ni moi non plus, je n'en serois pas surpris, parce que rien d'injuste ne doit surprendre de la part de quiconque a la force en main. Mais bien qu'une loi, qu'on n'observa jamais, défende au citoyen qui veut demeurer tel de sortir sans congé du territoire ; comme on n'a pas besoin de demander l'usage d'un droit qu'on a, quand un Genevois veut quitter tout-à-fait sa patrie pour aller s'établir en pays étranger, personne ne songe à lui en faire un crime, et on ne l'incarcère point pour cela. Il est vrai qu'ordinairement cette renonciation n'est pas solennelle, mais c'est qu'ordinairement ceux qui la font, n'ayant pas reçu des affronts publics, n'ont pas besoin de renoncer publiquement à la société qui les leur a faits.

"Monsieur, j'ai attendu, j'ai médité, j'ai cherché longtemps s'il y avoit quelque moyen d'éviter une démarche qui m'a déchiré. Je vous avois confié mon honneur, ô Genevois, et j'étois tranquille ; mais vous avez si mal gardé ce dépôt que vous me forcez de vous l'ôter.

"Mes bons anciens compatriotes, que j'aimerai toujours malgré votre ingratitude, de grâce, ne me forcez pas,

par vos propos durs et malhonnêtes, de faire publiquement mon apologie. Epargnez-moi, dans ma misère, la douleur de me défendre à vos dépens.

"Souvenez-vous, monsieur, que c'est malgré moi que je suis réduit à vous répondre sur ce ton. La vérité, dans cette occasion, n'en a pas deux. Si vous m'attaquiez moins durement, je ne chercherois qu'à verser mes peines dans votre sein. Votre amitié me sera toujours chère, je me ferai toujours un devoir de la cultiver; mais je vous conjure, en m'écrivant, de ne pas me la rendre si cruelle, et de mieux consulter votre bon cœur. Je vous embrasse de tout le mien."

LETTER FROM MOULTOU TO ROUSSEAU

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Ses Amis et ses Ennemis.

Neuchâtel autograph letters reproduced by Streckeisen-Moultou.

"25 Juin 1763.

"Vous avez sans doute compris, mon très-cher ami, les raisons de mon silence, mais il faut que je vous fasse connaître l'état des choses, vous recevrez plusieurs lettres auxquelles vous pourriez ne pas bien répondre, si vous n'étiez pas au fait de tout.[1]

"La démarche de notre ami[2] a été appuyée de la majeure partie de la B.; tous les citoyens l'approuvent, mais vos ennemis n'en sont que plus acharnés contre vous. Ils affectent de répandre que tout cela se fait à votre instigation, et ils tordent dans cette vue votre lettre[3] à M. Chappuis dans laquelle vous dites que si cinq à six bourgeois seulement eussent fait des représentations vous n'auriez pas accusé la patrie de vous avoir outragé. Vous sentez, cher concitoyen (car vous serez

[1] La renonciation de Rousseau à son droit de bourgeoisie avait jeté le trouble dans Genève, où les différentes factions prenaient parti pour ou contre le philosophe. C'ést à cet état de choses que Moultou fait allusion.

[2] De Luc.

[3] Lettre de Rousseau du 26 mai 1763.

toujours le mien), qu'il est bien aisé de répondre à cette sotte imputation, mais les meilleures raisons n'effleurent pas même des esprits aveuglés par la haine et par la fureur, et qui ne craignent plus d'être injustes. Ils veulent vous trouver coupable à tout prix. Ils appellent cette lettre le tocsin de la sédition. On m'a assuré que M. Chappuis l'a montrée aux magistrats, il me l'a nié, je ne le crois pas moins, et j'ai de très-bonnes raisons de le croire. Cet homme est gagné par vos ennemis, il a appuyé les représentations,[1] mais il ne l'a fait que de concert avec vos ennemis et pour conserver son crédit dans la bourgeoisie qu'il veut diviser. Je ne vous parle pas en l'air, j'ai de grandes raisons d'en être persuadé. A mon arrivée ici, il me vint faire une visite que je ne lui rendis qu'hier. Il me dit que les représentations étaient justes, qu'il les soutiendrait, que vous n'auriez qu'à venir et *qu'à finir avec le Consistoire*, qui ne pourrait qu'être content, puisque vous aviez contenté celui de Neuchâtel (cela ne me plut pas) ; que si la lettre qu'il vous avait écrite était dure, c'est qu'il vous aimait, et que vous deviez connaître sa franchise ; qu'il était au désespoir que celle que vous lui aviez écrite se fût répandue, qu'il me jurait n'y avoir point de part (je le crois). Je ne fus pas content de cette conversation. Ce matin, il est venu me voir, et m'a montré une lettre qu'il vous écrit aujourd'hui, et qui est très-dure, je le lui ai dit. Prenez donc garde, mon cher ami, à votre réponse, ménagez cet homme, il est dangereux, mais ses fausses démarches peuvent être utiles, il craint de perdre l'estime de ses concitoyens. Ne répondez point aux reproches qu'il vous fait d'avoir envoyé copie de votre lettre,[2] éludez cela. En témoignant votre sensibilité et votre reconnaissance pour vos concitoyens de l'intérêt qu'ils prennent à vous (et cela même d'une façon modérée), témoignez fortement que vous ne voudriez pas être

[1] Les représentations que la bourgeoise de Genève fit au Conseil en faveur de Rousseau.

[2] Lettre de Rousseau à M. Chappuis du 26 mai précédent.

l'occasion d'aucun trouble dans votre pays. En un mot, montrez que vous n'avez eu aucune part à ce qui se passe, ce qui est très-vrai, mais que l'estime de vos concitoyens vous flattera toujours. Il vaudrait mieux ne pas répondre que de répondre autrement.[1]—A quoi aboutira tout ceci, je n'en sais rien, mais certainement votre patrie s'est lavée aux yeux de l'Europe, et la flétrissure qu'elle avait voulu vous imprimer n'est plus ni sur vous ni sur elle. Notre ami est un héros,[2] il a fait pour vous au delà de ce que vous pouvez lui rendre, mais il n'est pas aussi juste que vous. Si vous saviez les peines domestiques que j'ai essuyées depuis quatre à cinq jours, les assauts que j'ai eus à soutenir d'un beau-père prévenu, qui avait effrayé mon père, vous me plaindriez. Tout ce qu'on put obtenir de moi, fut que je ne verrais pas de quelque temps votre ami, je le lui fis dire, il en prit des ombrages contre moi. Je crois pourtant qu'il en est revenu. Si cet homme avait autant de prudence que de chaleur, il serait admirable, il a eu tort de répandre la lettre à Chappuis, mais le mal n'est pas grand. . . ."

ROUSSEAU'S LETTER TO MOULTOU, WHICH MUST HAVE CROSSED MOULTOU'S LETTER

"*Motiers-Travers, ce lundi* 27 *juin* 1763.

"Je suis en peine de vous, mon cher Moultou ; seriez-vous malade ? Je le demande à tout le monde, et ne puis avoir de réponse. Vous qui étiez si exact à m'écrire dans les autres temps, comment vous taisez-vous dans la circonstance présente ? Ce silence a quelque chose d'alarmant.

"Je viens de recevoir une lettre de M. Marc Chappuis, dans laquelle il me parle ainsi : 'Vous avez envoyé dans cette ville copie de la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'hon-

[1] Rousseau ne répondit pas à M. Chappuis, comme on peut le voir pa sa lettre à Moultou du 7 juillet suivant.

[2] De Luc.

neur de m'écrire le 26 mai dernier. Cette copie, que je n'ai point vue, est tronquée, à ce que m'a assuré M. Moultou, qui m'est venu demander lecture de l'original.'

"Cet étrange passage demande explication. Je l'attends de vous, mon cher Moultou ; et ce n'est qu'après avoir reçu votre réponse que je ferai la mienne à M. Chappuis. M. de Sautern vous fait mille amitiés ; recevez les respects de mademoiselle Le Vasseur, et les embrassements de votre ami."

REPLY TO M. MOULTOU

"*Motiers-Travers, ce 7 juillet* 1763.

" Votre avis est honnête et sage. J'y reconnois la voix d'un ami : je vous remercie, et j'en profite. Mais avec aussi peu de crédit à Genève, que puis-je faire pour m'y faire écouter, surtout dans une affaire qui n'est pas tellement la mienne, qu'elle ne soit aussi celle de tous ? Renoncer, au moins pour ma part, à l'intérêt que j'y puis avoir, en déclarant nettement, comme je le fais aujourd'hui, qu'à quelque prix que ce soit, je n'accepterai jamais la restitution de ma bourgeoisie, et que je ne rentrerai jamais dans Genève. J'ai fait serment de l'un et de l'autre : ainsi me voilà lié sans retour ; et tout ce qu'on peut faire pour me rappeler est par conséquent inutile et vain. J'écris de plus à Deluc une lettre très forte, pour l'engager à se retirer ; j'en écris autant à mon cousin Rousseau. Voilà tout ce que je puis faire, et je le fais de très-bon cœur : rien de plus ne dépend de moi. L'interprétation qu'on donne à ma lettre à Chappuis, est aussi raisonnable que si, lorsque j'ai dit *non*, l'on en concluoit que j'ai voulu dire *oui*. Voulez-vous que je me défende devant des fourbes ou des stupides ? Je n'ai jamais rien su dire à ces gens-là, et je ne veux pas commencer. Ma conduite est, ce me semble, uniforme et claire ; pour l'interpréter il ne faut que du bon sens et un cœur droit. Adieu, cher Moultou.

J'aurois bien quelque chose à vous représenter sur ce que vous avez dit à Chappuis, que j'avois tronqué la copie de sa lettre ; car, quoique cela ait été dit à bonne intention, il ne faut pas déshonorer ses amis pour les servir.[1] Vous m'avouez, à la vérité, que cette copie n'est point tronquée ; mais il croit lui qu'elle l'est : il le doit croire, puisque vous le lui avez dit, et il part de là pour me croire et me dire un homme capable de falsification. Il ne me paroît pas avoir si grand tort, quoiqu'il se trompe.

"Au reste, quoi que vous en puissiez dire, je ne lui écrirai point comme à mon ami, puisque je sais qu'il ne l'est pas. Jécris à M. de Gauffecourt. O ce respectable Abauzit ! je suis donc condamné à ne le revoir jamais ! Ah ! je me trompe ; j'espère le revoir dans le séjour des justes. En attendant que cette commune patrie nous rassemble, adieu, mon ami.

"Le pauvre baron est parti en me chargeant de mille choses pour vous. Je suis resté seul, et dans quel moment !"

A M. DELUC

"*Motiers, le 7 juillet* 1763.

"Je crains, mon cher ami, que votre zèle patriotique n'aille un peu trop loin dans cette occasion, et que votre amour pour les lois n'expose à quelque atteinte la plus importante de toutes, qui est le salut de l'état. J'apprends que vous et vos dignes concitoyens méditez de nouvelles représentations ; et la certitude de leur inutilité me fait craindre qu'elles ne compromettent enfin vis-à-vis les uns des autres, ou la bourgeoisie, ou les magistrats. Je ne prétends pas me donner dans cette affaire une importance, qu'au surplus je ne tiendrois que de mes malheurs : je sais que vous avez à redresser des griefs qui, bien que relatifs à de simples particuliers, blessent la liberté publique. Mais, soit que je considère cette démarche relativement à moi, ou relativement au corps de la

[1] Il ne m'avoit pas compris et vit bien que je savois aussi bien que lui cette maxime.—*Note de M. Moultou.*

bourgeoisie, je la trouve également inutile et dangereuse ; et j'ajoute même que la solidité de vos raisons tournera toute à votre commun préjudice, en ce qu'ayant mis en poudre les sophismes de sa réponse, vous forcerez le conseil à ne pouvoir plus répliquer que par un sec *il n'y a lieu*, et par conséquent de rentrer, par le fait, en possession de son prétendu droit négatif, qui réduiroit à rien celui que vous avez de faire des représentations. Que si, après cela, vous vous obstinez à poursuivre le redressement des griefs (que tres-certainement vous n'obtiendrez point), il ne vous reste plus qu'une seule voie légitime, dont l'effet n'est rien moins qu'assuré, et qui, donnant atteinte à votre souveraineté, établiroit une planche très-dangereuse, et seroit un mal beaucoup pire que celui que vous voulez réparer.

"Je sais qu'une famille intrigante et rusée, s'étayant d'un grand crédit au dehors, sape à grands coups les fondements de la république, et que ses membres, jongleurs adroits et gens à deux envers, mènent le peuple par l'hypocrisie, et les grands par l'irréligion. Mais vous et vos concitoyens devez considérer que c'est vous-mêmes qui l'avez établie ; qu'il est trop tard pour tenter de l'abattre, et qu'en supposant même un succès qui n'est pas à présumer, vous pourriez vous nuire encore plus qu'à elle, et vous détruire en l'abaissant. Croyez-moi, mes amis, laissez-la faire ; elle touche à son terme, et je prédis que sa propre ambition la perdra, sans que la bourgeoisie s'en mêle. Ainsi, par rapport à la république, ce que vous voulez faire n'est pas utile en ce moment ; le succès est impossible, ou seroit funeste, et tout reprendra son cours naturel avec le temps.

"Par rapport à moi, vous connoissez ma manière de penser, et M. d'Ivernois, à qui j'ai ouvert mon cœur à son passage ici, vous dira, comme je vous ai écrit, et à tous mes amis, que, loin de désirer en cette circonstance des représentations, j'aurois voulu qu'elles n'eussent point été faites, et que je désire encore plus qu'elles n'aient aucune suite. Il est certain, comme je l'ai écrit à M.

Chappuis, qu'avant ma lettre à M. Favre, des représentations de quelques membres de la bourgeoisie, suffisant pour marquer qu'elle improuvoit la procédure, et mettant par conséquent mon honneur à couvert, eussent empêché une démarche que je n'ai faite que par force, avec douleur, et quand je ne pouvois plus m'en dispenser sans consentir à mon déshonneur. Mais une fois faite, et mon parti pris, cette démarche ne me laissant plus qu'un tendre souvenir de mes anciens compatriotes, et un désir sincère de les voir vivre en paix, toute démarche subséquente, et relative à celle-là, m'a paru déplacée, inutile ; et je ne l'ai ni désirée ni approuvée. J'avoue toutefois que vos représentations m'ont été honorables, en montrant que la procédure faite contre moi étoit contraire aux lois, et improuvée par la plus saine partie de l'état. Sous ce point de vue, quoique je n'aie point acquiescé à ces représentations, je ne puis en être fâché. Mais tout ce que vous ferez de plus maintenant n'est propre qu'à en détruire le bon effet, et à faire triompher mes ennemis et les vôtres, en criant que vous donnez à la vengeance ce que vous ne donnez qu'au maintien des lois.

" Je vous conjure donc, mon vertueux ami, par votre amour pour la patrie et pour la paix, de laisser tomber cette affaire, ou même d'en abandonner ouvertement la poursuite, au moins pour ce qui me regarde, afin que votre exemple entraîne ceux qui vous honorent de leur confiance, et que les griefs d'un particulier qui n'est plus rien à l'état n'en troublent point le repos. Ne soyez en peine, ni du jugement qu'on portera de cette retraite, ni du préjudice qu'en pourroit souffrir la liberté. La réponse du conseil, quoique tournée avec toute l'adresse imaginable, prête le flanc de tant de côtés, et vous donne de si grands prises, qu'il n'y a point d'homme un peu au fait qui ne sente le motif de votre silence, et qui ne juge que vous vous taisez pour avoir trop à dire. Et quant à la lésion des lois, comme elle en deviendra d'autant plus grande qu'on en aura plus vivement poursuivi la réparation sans l'obtenir, il vaut mieux fermer les yeux

dans une occasion où le manteau de l'hypocrisie couvre les attentats contre la liberté, que de fournir aux usurpateurs le moyen de consommer, au nom de Dieu, l'ouvrage de leur tyrannie.

" Pour moi, mon cher ami, quelque disposé que je fusse à me prêter à tout ce qui pouvoit complaire à mes anciens concitoyens, et à reprendre avec joie un titre qui me fut si cher, s'il m'eût été restitué de leur gré, d'un commun accord et d'une manière qui me l'eût pu rendre acceptable, vos démarches en cette occasion, et les maux qui peuvent en résulter, me forcent à changer de résolution sur ce point, et à en prendre une dont, quoi qu'il arrive, rien ne me fera départir. Je vous déclare donc, et j'en ai fait le serment, que de mes jours je ne remettrai le pied dans vos murs, et que, content de nourrir dans mon cœur les sentiments d'un vrai citoyen de Genève, je n'en reprendrai jamais le titre : ainsi toute démarche qui pourroit tendre à me le rendre est inutile et vaine. Après avoir sacrifié mes droits les plus chers à l'honneur, je sacrifie aujourd'hui mes espérances à la paix. Il ne me reste plus rien à faire. Adieu."

NOTE K

HUME AND THE ENGLISH PRESS

" In connection with the other libels against Rousseau published by Hume's friend Strahan (in the *St. James' Chronicle*) they certainly would not have appeared had Hume expressed his displeasure at the first libel, or publicly protested against such treatment of a famous man who had sought a refuge in England " (p. 177).

The first libel that appeared in the English press (like the opening act in Grimm's campaign of calumny in his *Correspondance Littéraire*) was a sort of biography of the " celebrated John James Rousseau ; " where the effort to make him appear a sophist and an impostor was hidden under a false history of his family and early

life. Here is the article as it exists in *Lloyd's Evening Post*, January 31st, 1766, a newspaper that has the dubious honour of having started the fashion of abusing a persecuted author whose arrival in England had before this date been signalized with sympathy and respect in all the leading English papers :

(*Lloyd's Evening Post*, January 31st to February 3rd, 1766.)

"SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CELEBRATED JOHN JAMES ROUSSEAU

"This extraordinary man was born at Geneva in the year 1708, of a family that boasted few other advantages than their virtues and their patriotism. His father was a seller of music, and he himself was bred to the business. He was early taught to regard his country with affection, and to feel that enthusiasm for liberty which he hath since contended for. One day, he tells us, the citizens of Geneva being at their annual exercise, when in the evening it was over, they joined hand and hand in a dance in the market-place, and thus continued for some time in that innocent mirth which is felt by a conscious communication of pleasure. In this general exultation of the citizens (continues Rousseau) my father caught me in his arms, crying out, 'My son, love your country.' Those embraces, and this exclamation, made the strongest impression, so mixing with his tender mind, that what might be reason in others, was almost constitution in him.

"The earlier part of his life was passed in obscurity, yet not in indolence. Though not professedly bred a scholar, yet he addicted himself to books, and soon attempted to improve their instruction by travel. With silent toil and attentive contemplation, Rousseau went from city to city, observed the manners as they rose, and caught the outlines of every future production.

"Rousseau was thirty-five before he ever thought of commencing to be an author. Not, indeed, that he

had never written till that time, but what he had written was only considered as a private amusement, rather than a work calculated for public inspection. In fact, so early as the age of eighteen he wrote a little comedy entitled, *Narcissus; or, the Self Lover*, which, however, was not acted until the year 1752, when it received but a very cool approbation.

"How he spent that part of his life, from eighteen to thirty-five, is unknown, and perhaps it is immaterial to know; it is sufficient to observe that we find him about this time in Paris, endeavouring to earn his bread by copying music. The first work he published was called *The Garden of Sylvia*, a little thing in which imagination holds the place of sense. One thing remarkable in this production is that he seems to foresee in it that he should one day stand forth as the champion of liberty, and act as a more important character on the stage of life.

"Every man, whatever may be his fame, owes a part of it to chance and a part to abilities. A question happening to be proposed by the academy at Dijon, namely, whether the revival of arts and sciences has contributed to the emendation of morals, Rousseau thought this a fit opportunity to give scope to his paradoxical turn of thinking, and he undertook, with great spirit and more eloquence, to prove that arts and sciences only contributed to render men more vicious and more unhappy. His discourse had the desired effect: it procured him the prize he contended for; it procured him more, namely, the applause of the public. The King of Prussia being among the number of those who thought proper to answer this discourse was not the least honour that was done it; the defending, answering, and vindicating of this work involved our philosopher in a literary warfare, and dubbed him a man of letters, at a time that others begin to think of retiring from the press.

"It was about this time that a lady of the first

distinction in Paris was willing to give Rousseau some marks of her satisfaction in his performances, but hearing that he refused all pecuniary offers with some indignation, she sent him some music to copy, which, supposing to be in the way of his profession, she expected that he would not refuse whatever she thought proper to pay him for his labour; she therefore sent him a purse of gold when the work was done; but he only deducted a few shillings from her favour, which was the real price of his trouble, and sent her back the rest.

"His name being now established, several successive pieces made their appearance, such as the *Devin du Village*, a musical entertainment performed with great applause, by which, however, he had a dispute with the musicians of France; and his letter on French music contributed still further to excite their resentment. Their musical mania went so far as to hang him in effigy. His discourse upon *The Origin of the Inequality among Mankind*, which may justly be reckoned his greatest and best performance, followed next. In this he endeavours to show that all men, being originally equal, were necessarily free, and that all social engagements were but fetters imposed upon the indolence, ignorance, or weakness of humanity.

"A *Letter to d'Alembert* upon theatrical exhibitions was his next performance; in this he only traced the path of our countrymen, Prynn and Collier; for the French writers often embrace our literary paradoxes when we begin to throw them aside. He there condemns playhouses with some warmth. To the reasons of this work d'Alembert and Marmontel returned copious and sufficient answers, but people would resort to the playhouse whether they had answered it or no.

"The *New Héloïse* next appeared, which did more honour to his genius than his philosophy. The *Social Contract* and *Emile* succeeded; and the liberty he takes in them of disturbing received opinions and undermining established doctrine in religion procured him more

formidable enemies than his former merely philosophical paradoxes could have done. His native city thought proper upon this occasion to disclaim and banish him, and after wandering from state to state, exclaiming at the prejudice and malice of mankind, half a philosopher, and half a humorist, drest in an Armenian habit, and mistaking novelty of opinion for justness of thinking, he has at length thought proper to retire to end his days (as is supposed) in this land of boasted liberty."

Walpole's letter, adorned by Hume, was published in the *St. James's Chronicle* on April 3, 1766. It was printed in both French and English, under the heading "Letter from the King of Prussia to J. J. Rousseau." No explanatory note either introduced or followed the letter; in other words, there was no attempt to suggest that it was not an authentic document. Rousseau's just and necessary protest against the presentation of this malicious forgery to the English public as a genuine letter is dated April 7, and was printed in the *St. James's Chronicle* on April 9, also in French and English. On April 16, and on May 6, the same paper printed two long anonymous letters, where Rousseau was ridiculed for having taken a mere joke seriously; and told, in so many words, that his misfortunes and persecutions were produced by his own absurd vanity and ill nature. This is precisely the attitude taken up by Hume, in his *Succinct Exposure*, where he treats the "pleasantry" of the "false letter" as quite an every-day and an inevitable accident, and condemns Rousseau's protest, as a manifestation of extravagant egotism. Hume also affirms that he never "saw," either before or after their publication, the two libels that appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle* in June, which Rousseau affirmed could not have been supplied to the paper by any one but himself: the first libel, which described Rousseau

as insulting the French Government and defying its decree by promenading the streets in his Armenian dress, in such a way as made his presence in Paris an affront to the Parliament; and the second, which affirmed that in England he welcomed distinguished visitors but received humbler people, and even his own relations, coldly. Here is Hume's note upon the subject of this libel:—"Je n'ai jamais vu cette pièce ni avant ni après sa publication, et tous ceux à qui j'en ai parlé n'en ont aucune connoissance."

This denial amounts only to the assertion that Hume did not see the proof of the article before it was printed, nor the copy of the *St. James's Chronicle* which gave it to the public:—*the truthful David does not affirm that the information embodied in the article was not supplied by him.*

The summing up of the case after his apology by a contemporary critic is given us by Madame de la Tour de Franqueville in her *Observations sur l'Exposé Succinct.*[1]

"En récapitulant ses griefs,[2] M. *Rousseau* fait mention de plusieurs libelles. M. *Hume* convient de quelques uns, se contentant d'observer qu'il n'y a pas trempé. Voyez page 82.

"Il en cite un où l'auteur ne peut déguiser sa rage sur l'accueil qu'on avoit fait à M. *Rousseau* à Paris.

"Un autre [3] où l'on dit qu'il ouvre sa porte aux grands, la ferme aux petits, reçoit mal ses parens, pour ne rien dire de plus.

"M. *Hume* dit du premier (page 82): 'Je n'ai aucune connoissance de ce prétendu libelle: et du second (page 87): Je n'ai jamais vu cette piece ni avant ni après sa publication; et tous ceux à qui j'en ai parle n'en ont aucune connoissance.'

"En admettant ce fait il faut convenir qu'il tient du

[1] Oeuvre de Rousseau, tome xxvii. ed. 1793.
[2] Page 80. [3] Page 87.

miracle.[1] Puisque M. *Hume* n'a pu se procurer a Londres ce que j'ai lu ici, il n'a qu'à prendre le *Saint-James's Chronicle,* n°· 821 ; à la quatrieme page il y trouvera un article pour M. *Rousseau* contenant trois demandes, et une réflexion qui assaisonne le tout.

"Dans la seconde question, on demande, Comment a-t-il pu se faire 'que l'auteur de la *Nouvelle Héloïse* soit froid (pour ne rien dire de plus) envers ses parens et amis, qu'il change souvent ces derniers, et qu'il en ait eu plusieurs qu'il a ensuite appelés monstres ?'

"Que l'auteur de l'*Inégalité* ait ouvert sa porte aux grands, et qu'il l'ait fermée aux petits ?

"Le lecteur peut examiner à présent avec plus de sureté ce que M. *Rousseau* dit pages 89, 90, où il accuse formellement M. *Hume* d'avoir fourni cet article. Il est vrai que M. *Hume* s'en lave bien en assurant qu'il n'étoit pas présent lorsqu'il reçut son cousin.

"Je ne pousserai pas plus loin l'examen des notes sur la lettre de M. *Rousseau;* elles consistent pour la plupart en dénis, en défaut de mémoire : ce que j'ai dit de quelques unes peut faire apprécier les autres, qui ne sont d'ailleurs ni longues ni nombreuses.

"La lettre de M. *Hume* en réponse à celle de M. *Rousseau* est, j'ose le dire, froide, stérile, et ne débat qu'un seul article intéressant, la scene attendissante qui s'est passée entre eux et qu'ils narrent différemment. Ces récits sont trop essentiels pour ne pas les comparer. Si on le fait attentivement, il ne sera pas aussi difficile qu'on pourroit le croire d'assigner celui des deux qui mérite qu'on y ajoute foi.

"J'ai prouvé, en examinant l'avertissement de messieurs les éditeurs, que c'étoient eux seuls ou les autres amis de M. *Hume* qui avoient fait bruyamment connoître ses démêles : si par hasard le motif de cet éclat leur eût

[1] Jamais peuple n'eut plus de papiers publics et ne les lut plus avidement que les Anglois : les manouvriers les lisent dans les cabarets, les gens riches dans les cafés ou chez eux ; tout le monde s'en mêle.

été inspiré par la crainte des futurs mémoires de M. *Rousseau*, auxquels on le prétend occupé, ils auroient surement senti qu'il seroit ridicule de justifier M. *Hume* sur une accusation à venir. Tout le temps qu'elle eût été entre M. *Rousseau* et M. *Hume* elle n'existoit pas pour le public : il falloit donc, pour la traduire à son tribunal, nécessairement répandre la rupture de ces hommes célèbres, noircir M. *Rousseau*, attendre que le public se récriât contre des imputations sans preuves ; alors saisir, comme on dit, la balle au bond, et faire imprimer l'écrit ou mémoire sur lequel j'ai fait des observations ; écrit soigneusement préparé, et destiné à l'usage que M. *Hume* ou ses amis trouveroient bon. On voit l'emploi que leur prudence raffinée leur en a fait faire sous le titre d'*Exposé succinct*, qui méritoit au moins l'épithete de justification convenablement préparée.

"Je ne ferai point de réflexions sur un fait aussi énergique ; mais, résumant en peu de mots tout ce qui a été dit sur la querelle des deux savans, je rappellerai une vérité commune qui en montre la base. Les hommes ne font jamais du mal que lorsqu'ils ont intérêt et possibilité de la faire. M. *Rousseau*, soupirant après un état tranquille qu'il alloit chercher en Angleterre, y arrivant sans habitude ainsi que sans parti, n'avoit ni intérêt ni moyens pour attaquer M. *Hume*, dont il ne connoissoit ni la langue ni les ennemis, s'il en a. Cependant il s'est élevé un démêlé entre eux.

"J'ai avancé, non sans raisons et sans preuves, que M. *Rousseau* avoit des ennemis à Genève, à Paris, et que M. *Hume* étoit le plastron derrière lequel ils se sont *tapis* comme des *braves*. J'ai établi que ces ennemis avoient poursuivi M. *Rousseau* de Genève en Suisse ; que de concert ils l'avoient attaqué à Londres par d'indignes libelles assez mal déguisés : il est constant que M. *Hume* est lié avec eux. J'ai prouvé que, sous le marque de l'*incognito*, les mêmes personnes ont publié les démêlés de M. *Hume*, que vraisemblablement

ils avoient ourdis ; qu'ils ont fait bruit de ces démêlés pour avoir occasion de produire la justification *pochée* du docte Breton, dont ils ont dirigé, arrangé les matériaux : le motif qui les a fait agir c'est la haine armée par l'envie. L'on a vu dans cet écrit hâtivement fait leurs moyens et leur but, qui étoit de perdre M. *Rousseau* en cherchant à le couvrir tout à-la-fois des traits poignans du ridicule et de la noirceur de l'ingratitude. Trop de personnes auroient à rougir si j'observois que rire d'une méchanceté lâchée sur un homme souffrant et persécuté n'est d'une belle âme : je croirois offenser le public, M. *Rousseau*, et me manquer à moi-même, si je cherchois à laver ce philosophe d'un vice qui n'est connu que des âmes viles. Je ne dirai rien de plus à ses scientifiques ennemis."

NOTE L

VOLTAIRE AND ROUSSEAU

(p. 101, vol. ii.)

Was Rousseau insane or a calumniator when he described Voltaire as his vindictive enemy and persecutor? Voltaire indignantly repudiated the name of "persecutor" of Rousseau. He asserted that he had frankly expressed his opinion of Rousseau's works (that the 'Héloïse' was *pitiable*, the 'Contrat Social' *anti-social*, 'Emile' *fade and tiresome*), but that, far from persecuting the author, he had offered him a retreat at Fernay, when he was forced to fly from France ; and had defended him against the charge of impiety when he was condemned at Geneva. On the other hand, Voltaire maintained that Rousseau had done his best to stir up persecutions for him (Voltaire), that he had denounced him as a corrupter of morals, because he gave theatrical performances at Les Délices ; and further, that in the *Letters from the Mountain*, Jean Jacques had played

the part of an informer, "*un délateur*," and had denounced him to the Council of Geneva as the author of an anonymous attack upon the Christian religion, entitled *Le Sermon des Cinquantes.*

To discover where the truth lay, and who between Voltaire and Rousseau was the persecutor and informer, we have to consult Voltaire's own correspondence between the years 1761 and 1770; and to acquaint ourselves with the evidence which establishes him as the author of a series of anonymous libels circulated in this period.

The first documents which assist us to arrive at a just appreciation of the case, are two letters found in Voltaire's correspondence: the first, a private letter written by him to the Maréchale, Duchess of Luxembourg, January 1765; the second, an open letter to David Hume, dated October 22, 1766. These letters give us what may be called Voltaire's apology for his conduct towards Rousseau. In other words, they put us in possession of his version of the facts; and permit us to judge how far he showed respect for truth, or compassion, or common justice towards a man in misfortune, when exposing his grievances against a younger writer who had personally offended him; and a "philosopher" whom he had allowed himself to be persuaded was a traitor in the camp, "*un faux frère*," deserving punishment. When reading these letters one has to remember that in January 1765, Rousseau, proscribed in France and Switzerland, and a refugee in Prussian territory at Motiers, stood sorely in need of friends; and that, in France, he had no more influential partisan than the Maréchale, Duchess of Luxembourg; whilst in October 1766, betrayed by Hume, and isolated at Wootton, his situation left him defenceless, and at the mercy of clamorous enemies, both in Paris and in England.

LETTRE II

A MADAME LA MARÉCHALE DE LUXEMBOURG

"9 *de janvier.*

"MADAME,—L'honneur que j'ai eu de vous faire ma cour plusieurs années, vos bontés, mon respectueux attachement, me mettent en droit d'attendre de vous autant de justice que vous accordez de protection à M. *Rousseau* de Genève.

"Il publie un livre qui jette un peu de trouble dans sa patrie ; mais qui croirait que dans ce livre il excite le conseil de Genève contre moi ? Il se plaint que ce conseil condamne ses ouvrages, et ne condamne pas les miens ; comme si ce conseil de Genève était mon juge. Il me dénonce publiquement ainsi qu'un accusé en défère un autre. Il dit que je suis l'auteur d'un libelle intitulé, Sermon des Cinquante ; libelle le plus violent qu'on ait jamais fait contre la religion chrétienne, libelle imprimé, depuis plus de quinze ans, à la suite de *l'Homme machine de la Métrie.*

"Est-il possible, madame, qu'un homme qui se vante de votre protection, joue ainsi le rôle de délateur et de calomniateur ? Il n'est point d'excuses, sans doute, pour une action si coupable et si lâche ; mais quelle peut en être la cause ? la voici, Madame.

"Il y a cinq ans que quelques Génevois venaient chez moi représenter des pièces de théâtre ; c'est un exercice qui apprend à la fois à bien parler et à bien prononcer, et qui donne même de la grâce au corps comme à l'esprit. La déclamation est au rang des beaux arts. M. *d'Alembert* alors fit imprimer, dans le *Dictionnaire encyclopédique,* un article sur Genève, dans lequel il conseillait à cette ville opulente d'établir chez elle des spectacles. Plusieurs citoyens se récrièrent contre cette idée ; on disputa ; la ville se partagea. M. *Rousseau,* qui venait de donner un opéra et des comédies à Paris, écrivit de Montmorenci contre les spectacles.

"Je fus bien surpris de recevoir alors une lettre de lui, conçue en ces termes : *Monsieur, je ne vous aime point, vous corrompez ma république, en donnant chez vous des spectacles ; est-ce-là le prix de l'asile qu'elle vous à donné ?*

"Plusieurs personnes virent cette lettre singulière ; elle l'était trop pour que j'y répondisse ; je me contentai de le plaindre, et même, en dernier lieu, quand il fut obligé de quitter la France, je lui fis offrir pour asile cette même campagne qu'il me reprochait d'avoir choisie près de Genève. Le même esprit qui l'avait porté, madame, à m'écrire une lettre si outrageante, l'avait brouillé en ce temps-là avec le célèbre médecin M. *Tronchin*, comme avec les autres personnes qui avaient eu quelques liaisons avec lui.

"Il crut qu'ayant offensé M. *Tronchin* et moi, nous devions le haïr ; c'est en quoi il se trompait beaucoup. Je pris publiquement son parti quand il fut condamné à Genève ; je dis hautement qu'en jugeant son roman d'*Emile*, on ne fesait pas assez d'attention que les discours du vicaire savoyard, regardés comme si coupables, n'étaient que des doutes auxquels ce prêtre même répondait par une résignation qui devait désarmer ses adversaires ; je dis que les objections de l'abbé *Houteville*, contre la religion chrétienne, sont beaucoup plus fortes, et ses réponses beaucoup plus faibles ; enfin, je pris la défense de M. *Rousseau*. Cependant M. *Rousseau* vous dit, madame, et fit même imprimer que M. *Tronchin* et moi, nous étions ses persécuteurs. Quels persécuteurs qu'un malade de soixante et onze ans, persécuté lui-même jusque dans sa retraite, et un médecin consulté par l'Europe entière, uniquement occupé de soulager les maux des hommes, et qui certainement n'a pas le temps de se mêler dans leurs misérables querelles !

"Il y a plus de dix ans que je suis retiré à la campagne auprès de Genève, sans être entré quatre fois dans cette ville ; j'ai toujours ignoré ce qui se passe dans cette république ; je n'ai jamais parlé de M. *Rousseau* que

pour le plaindre. Je fus très-fâché que M. le marquis de *Ximenès* l'eut tourné en ridicule. J'ai été outragé par lui, sans lui jamais répondre; et aujourd'hui il me dénonce juridiquement, il me calomnie dans le temps même que je prends publiquement son parti. Je suis bien sûr que vous condamnez un tel procédé, et qu'il ne s'en serait pas rendu coupable, s'il avait voulu mériter votre protection. Je finis, madame, pas vous demander pardon de vous importuner de mes plaintes ; mais voyez si elles sont justes, et daignez juger entre la conduite de M. *Rousseau* et la mienne.

"Agréez le profond respect et l'attachement inviolable avec lequel je serai toute ma vie, madame, etc.

"Je ne peux avoir l'honneur de vous écrire de ma main, étant presque entièrement aveugle."

LETTRE III

A M. DAMILOVILLE

"12 *de janvier.*

"Quelle horreur ! quelle abomination, mon cher frère ! il y a donc en effet des diables ! vraiment, je ne le croyais pas. Comment peut-on imaginer une telle absurdité ? suis-je un prêtre ? suis-je un ministre ? En verité cela fait pitié. Mais ce qui fait plus de pitié encore, c'est l'affreuse conduite de *Jean-Jacques* ; on ne connaît pas ce monstre.

"Tenez, voilà deux feuillets de ses *Lettres de la Montagne*, et voilà la lettre que j'ai été forcé d'écrire à Madame la Maréchale de *Luxembourg*, qu'il a eu l'adresse de prévenir contre moi. Je vous prie de n'en point tirer de copie, mais de la faire lire à M. d'*Argental* ; c'est toute la vengeance que je tirerai de ce malheureux. Quel temps, grand Dieu, a-t-il pris pour rendre la philosophie odieuse ! le temps même où elle allait triompher.

"Je me flatte que vous montrerez à *Protagoras*-

Archimède[1] la copie que je vous envoie. Je vous avoue que tous ces attentats contre la philosophie, par un homme qui se disait philosophe, me désespèrent.

"Frère *Gabriel*[2] doit avoir envoyé une petite lettre de change payable à *Archimède*. Je verrai lundi les premières épreuves; il sera servi comme il mérite de l'être. Si vous voulez être informé de toutes les horreurs de *J. J.*, écrivez à *Gabriel*, il vous en dira des nouvelles. Le nom de *Rousseau* n'est pas heureux pour la bonne morale et la bonne conduite.

"Au reste, mon cher frère, je serais très-fâché que mes lettres, prétendues *secrètes*, fussent débitées à Paris. Quelle rage de publier des *lettres secrètes!* J'ai prié instamment M. *Marin* de renvoyer ces rogatons en Hollande, d'où elles sont venues. Je suis bien las d'être homme public, et de me voir condamné aux bêtes comme les anciens gladiateurs et les anciens chrétiens. L'état où je suis ne demande que le repos et la retraite. Il faut mourir en paix! mais afin que je meure gaiement, *écr. l'inf.*"

A M. HUME

"*Ferney, 24 d'octobre.*

"J'ai lu, monsieur, les pièces du procès que vous avez eu à soutenir par-devant le public contre votre ancien protégé. J'avoue que la grande âme de *Jean-Jacques* a mis au jour la noirceur avec laquelle vous l'avez comblé de bienfaits; et c'est en vain qu'on a dit que c'est le procès de l'ingratitude contre la bienfesance.

"Je me trouve impliqué dans cette affaire. Le fier *Rousseau* m'accuse de lui avoir écrit, en Angleterre, une lettre dans laquelle je me moque de lui.[3] Il a accusé M. d'*Alembert* du même crime.

"Quand nous serions coupables au fond de notre

[1] Diderot. [2] Tronchin.

[3] Lettre au docteur *Pansophe*, imprimée à Londres sous le nom de M. de *Voltaire*.

cœur, M. d'*Alembert* et moi, de cette énormité, je vous jure que je ne le suis point de lui avoir écrit. Il y a sept ans que je n'ai eu cet honneur. Je ne connais point la lettre dont il parle, et je vous jure que, si j'avais fait quelque mauvaise plaisanterie fur M. *J. J. Rousseau*, je ne la désavouerais pas.

"Il m'a fait l'honneur de me mettre au nombre de ses ennemis et de ses persécuteurs. Intimement persuadé qu'on doit lui élever une statue, comme il le dit dans la lettre polie et décente de *Jean-Jacques Rousseau, citoyen de Genève, à Christophe de Beaumont, archevêque de Paris*, il pense que la moitié de l'univers est occupée à dresser cette statue sur son piédestal et l'autre moitié à la renverser.

"Non-seulement il m'a cru iconoclaste, mais il s'est imaginé que j'avais conspiré contre lui avec le conseil de Genève, pour faire décréter sa propre personne de prise de corps, et ensuite avec le conseil de Berne pour le faire chasser de la Suisse.

"Il a persuadé ces belles choses aux protecteurs qu'il avait alors à Paris, et il m'a fait passer dans leur esprit pour un homme qui persécutait en lui la sagesse et la modestie. Voici, monsieur, comment je l'ai persécuté.

"Quand je sus qu'il avait beaucoup d'ennemis à Paris, qu'il aimait comme moi la retraite, et que je présumai qu'il pouvait rendre quelques services à la philosophie, je lui fis proposer, par M. *Marc Chappuis* citoyen de Genève, dès l'an 1759, une maison de campagne appelée l'*Hermitage*, que je venais d'acheter.

"Il fut si touché de mes offres, qu'il m'écrivit ces propres mots:

"'MONSIEUR,

"'Je ne vous aime point, vous corrompez ma république en donnant des spectacles dans votre château de Tourney, etc.'

"Cette lettre de la part d'un homme qui venait de donner à Paris un grave opéra et une comédie, n'était

cependant pas datée des petites-maisons. Je n'y fis point de réponse, comme vous le croyez bien, et je priai M. *Tronchin* le médecin de vouloir bien lui envoyer une ordonnance pour cette maladie. M. *Tronchin* me répondit que, puisqu'il ne pouvait pas me guérir de la manie de faire encore des pièces de théâtre à mon âge, il désespérait de guérir *Jean-Jacques*. Nous restâmes l'un et l'autre fort malades, chacun de notre côté.

"En 1762 le conseil de Genève entreprit sa cure, et donna une espèce d'ordre de s'assurer de lui pour le mettre dans les remèdes. *Jean-Jacques*, décrété à Paris et à Genève, convaincu qu'un corps ne peut être en deux lieux à la fois, s'enfuit dans un troisième. Il conclut, avec sa prudence ordinaire, que j'étais son ennemi mortel, puisque je n'avais pas répondu à sa lettre obligeante. Il supposa qu'une partie du conseil génevois était venue dîner chez moi pour conjurer sa perte, et que la minute de son arrêt avait été écrite sur ma table, à la fin du repas. Il persuada une chose si vraisemblable à quelques-uns de ses concitoyens. Cette accusation devint si sérieuse que je fus obligé enfin d'écrire au conseil de Genève une lettre très forte, dans laquelle je lui dis que, s'il y avait un seul homme dans ce corps qui m'eût jamais parlé du moindre dessein contre le sieur *Rousseau*, je consentais qu'on le regardât comme un scélérat et moi aussi, et que je détestais trop les persécuteurs pour l'être.

"Le conseil me répondit, par un secrétaire d'Etat, que je n'avais jamais eu, ni dû avoir, ni pu avoir la moindre part, ni directement, ni indirectement, à la condamnation du sieur *Jean-Jacques*.

"Les deux lettres sont dans les archives du conseil de Genève.

"Cependant M. *Rousseau*, retiré dans les délicieuses vallées de Moutier-Travers, ou Motier-Travers, au comté de Neuchâtel, n'ayant pas eu, depuis un grand nombre d'années, le plaisir de communier sous les deux espèces, demanda instamment au prédicant de Moutier-Travers,

homme d'un esprit fin et délicat, la consolation d'être admis à la sainte table; il lui dit que son intention était 1°. *de combattre l'Eglise romaine;* 2°. *de s'élever contre l'ouvrage infernal de l'Esprit, qui établit évidemment le matérialisme;* 3°. *de foudroyer les nouveaux philosophes vains et présomptueux.* Il écrivit et signa cette déclaration, et elle est encore entre les mains de M. de *Montmollin,* prédicant de Moutier-Travers et de Boveresse.

" Dès qu'il eut communié, il se sentit le cœur dilaté, il s'*attendrit jusqu'aux larmes.* Il le dit au moins dans sa lettre du 8 d'auguste 1765.

" Il se brouilla bientôt avec le prédicant et les prêchés de Moutier-Travers et de Boveresse. Les petits garçons et les petites filles lui jetèrent des pierres; il s'enfuit sur les terres de Berne, et ne voulant plus être lapidé, il supplia messieurs de Berne *de vouloir bien avoir la bonté de le faire enfermer le reste de ses jours dans quelqu'un de leurs chateaux, ou tel autre lieu de leur Etat qu'il leur semblerait bon de choisir.* Sa lettre est du 20 d'octobre 1765.

" Depuis Madame la comtesse de *Pimbèche,* à qui l'on conseillait de se faire lier, je ne crois pas qu'il soit venu dans l'esprit de personne de faire une pareille requête. Messieurs de Berne aimèrent mieux le chasser que de se charger de son logement.

" Le judicieux *Jean Jacques* ne manqua pas de conclure que c'était moi qui le privais de la douce consolation d'être dans une prison perpétuelle, et que même j'avais tant de crédit chez les prêtres, que je le fesais excommunier par les chrétiens de Moutier-Travers et de Boveresse.

" Ne pensez pas que je plaisante, monsieur. Il écrit, dans une lettre du 24 de juin 1765 : *Etre excommunié de la façon de M. de V. m'amusera fort aussi.* Et dans sa lettre du 23 de mars, il dit : *M. de V. doit avoir écrit à Paris qu'il se fait fort de faire chasser Rousseau de sa nouvelle patrie.*

" Le bon de l'affaire est qu'il a réussi à faire croire;

pendant quelque temps, cette folie à quelques personnes, et la vérité est que, si au lieu de la prison qu'il demandait à Messieurs de Berne, il avait voulu se réfugier dans la maison de campagne que je lui avais offerte, je lui aurais donné alors cet asile, où j'aurais eu soin qu'il eût de bons bouillons avec des potions rafraîchissantes, bien persuadé qu'un homme dans son état mérite beaucoup plus de compassion que de colère.

" Il est vrai qu'à la sagesse toujours conséquente de sa conduite et de ses écrits, il a joint des traits qui ne sont pas d'une bonne âme. J'ignore si vous savez qu'il a écrit des *Lettres de la Montagne*. Il se rend, dans la cinquième lettre, formellement délateur contre moi ; cela n'est pas bien. Un homme qui a communié sous les deux espèces, un sage à qui on doit élever des statues, semble dégrader un peu son caractère par une telle manœuvre ; il hasarde son salut et sa réputation.

" Aussi la première chose qu'ont faite messieurs les médiateurs de France, de Zurich et de Berne, a été de déclarer solennellement les *Lettres de la Montagne* une libelle calomnieux. Il n'y a plus moyen que j'offre une maison à *Jean-Jacques*, depuis qu'il a été affiché calomniateur au coin des rues.

" Mais en fesant le métier de délateur et d'homme un peu brouillé avec la vérité, il faut avouer qu'il a toujours conservé son caractère de modestie.

" Il me fit l'honneur de m'écrire, avant que la médiation arrivât à Genève, ces propres mots :

" ' Monsieur,

" ' Si vous avez dit que je n'ai pas été secrétaire d'ambassade à Venise, vous avez menti ; et si je n'ai pas été secrétaire d'ambassade, et si je n'en ai pas eu les honneurs, c'est moi qui ai menti.'

" J'ignorais que M. *Jean-Jacques* eût été secrétaire d'ambassade ; je n'en avais jamais dit un seul mot ; parce que je n'en avais jamais entendu parler.

" Je montrai cette agréable lettre à un homme véridique

fort au fait des affaires étrangères, curieux et exact: ces gens-là sont dangereux pour ceux qui citent au hasard. Il déterra les lettres originales, écrites de la main de *Jean-Jacques*, du 9 et du 13 d'auguste 1743, à M. *du Theil*, premier commis des affaires étrangères, alors son protecteur. On y voit ces propres paroles:

"'J'ai été deux ans le domestique de M. le comte de *Montaigu* (ambassadeur à Venise) . . . J'ai mangé son pain. . . .; il m'a chassé honteusement de sa maison . . .; il m'a menacé de me faire jeter par la fenêtre, et de pis, si je restais plus long-temps dans Venise. . . etc. etc.'

"Voilà un secrétaire d'ambassade assez peu respecté, et la fierté d'une grande âme peu ménagée. Je lui conseille de faire graver au bas de sa statue les paroles de l'ambassadeur au secrétaire d'ambassade.

"Vous voyez, monsieur, que ce pauvre homme n'a jamais pu ni se maintenir sous aucun maître; ni se conserver aucun ami, attendu qu'il est contre la dignité de son être d'avoir un maître, et que l'amitié est une faiblesse dont un sage doit repousser les atteintes.

"Vous dites qu'il fait l'histoire de sa vie; elle a été trop utile au monde, et remplie de trop grands évènemens pour qu'il ne rend pas à la postérité le service de la publier. Son goût pour la vérité ne lui permettra pas de déguiser la moindre de ses anecdotes, pour servir à l'education des princes qui voudront être menuisiers comme *Emile*.

"A dire vrai, monsieur, toutes ces petites misères ne méritent pas qu'on s'en occupe deux minutes; tout cela tombe bientôt dans un éternel oubli. On ne s'en soucie pas plus que des baisers âcres de la nouvelle *Héloïse*, et de son doux ami, et des lettres de *Vernet* à un lord qu'il n'a jamais vu. Les folies de *Jean-Jacques* et son ridicule orgueil ne feront nul tort à la veritable philosophie, et les hommes respectables qui la cultivent en France, en Angleterre et en Allemagne, n'en seront pas moins estimés."

Inasmuch as Voltaire was not on terms of intimate

correspondence either with the Duchess of Luxembourg or with Hume, and inasmuch as secure, wealthy, and honoured himself, neither self-interest nor self-defence compelled him to justify himself at the expense of Jean Jacques, proscribed, poor and maligned, no other explanation of his purpose in writing these letters can be given than his deliberate intention to injure Rousseau, by spoiling the good-will towards him of a valuable protectress in 1765, and by strengthening the hands of a vindictive enemy in 1766, so that if even the statements made in these letters had been true, their production without necessity in a time when they would aggravate the misfortunes of a much-afflicted man would prove that Voltaire was Rousseau's persecutor. But were the statements true? Did Voltaire describe the case correctly when he maintained that Rousseau's only reason for regarding Voltaire as his enemy was that he, Rousseau, had behaved badly to him? Was it true that Voltaire had no share in the libellous letters attributed to the Marquis de Ximenès? Had Voltaire, when Rousseau was forced to fly from France, offered him a retreat at Fernay, and refrained from all but counsels of tolerance and compassion when *Emile* was condemned at Geneva? Had Voltaire never spread the report that Rousseau was an impostor, who claimed to have been the secretary when he had really been the valet of the French ambassador at Venice? And, on Rousseau's side, was it true that he had written Voltaire a letter of insult in reply to an offer of service? That he had engaged to write against Helvétius, if the pastor of Motiers admitted him to the Sacred Table? And that he had played the part of informer against Voltaire, by denouncing him to the Council of Geneva as the author of Le Sermon des Cinquantes? Before examining these charges separately it will be useful to give Rousseau's own reply to a correspondent who had written to ask for categorical answers to the accusations made by Voltaire.

RÉPONSES

AUX QUESTIONS FAITES PAR M. DE CHAUVEL

"*Wootton, Octobre* 1766.

"Jamais, ni en 1759 ni en aucun autre temps, M. Marc Chappuis ne m'a proposé, de la part de M. de Voltaire, d'habiter une petite maison appelée l'Ermitage. En 1756, M. de Voltaire, me pressant de revenir dans ma patrie, m'invitoit d'aller boire du lait de ses vaches : je lui répondis. Sa lettre et la mienne furent publiques. Je ne me ressouviens pas d'avoir eu de sa part aucune autre invitation.

"Ce que j'écrivis à M. de Voltaire en 1760 n'étoit point une réponse. Ayant retrouvé par hasard le brouillon de cette lettre, je la transcris ici, permettant à M. de Chauvel d'en faire l'usage qu'il lui plaira.

"Je ne me souviens point exactement de ce que j'écrivis il y a vingt-trois ans à M. du Theil ; mais il est vrai que j'ai été domestique de M. de Montaigu, ambassadeur de France à Venise, et que j'ai mangé son pain comme ses gentilshommes étoient ses domestiques et mangeoient son pain ; avec cette différence que j'avois partout le pas sur les gentilshommes, que j'allois au sénat, que j'assistois aux conférences, et que j'allois en visite chez les ambassadeurs et ministres étrangers, ce qu'assurément les gentilshommes de l'ambassadeur n'eussent osé faire. Mais bien qu'eux et moi fussions ses domestiques, il ne s'ensuit point que nous fussions ses valets.

"Il est vrai qu'ayant répondu sans insolence, mais avec fermeté, aux brutalités de l'ambassadeur, dont le ton ressembloit assez à celui de M. de Voltaire, il me menaça d'appeler ses gens et de me faire jeter par les fenêtres. Mais ce que M. de Voltaire ne dit pas, et dont tout Venise rit beaucoup dans ce temps-là, c'est que, sur cette menace, je m'approchai de la porte de son cabinet, où nous étions ; puis l'ayant fermée et mis la clef dans ma poche, je revins à M. de Montaigu, et lui dis : *Non pas,*

s'il vous plaît, monsieur l'ambassadeur; les tiers sont incommodes dans les explications; trouvez bon que celle-ci se passe entre nous. A l'instant Son Excellence devint très-polie; nous nous séparâmes fort honnêtement; et je sortis de sa maison, non pas honteusement, comme il plaît à M. de Voltaire de me faire dire, mais en triomphe. J'allai loger chez l'abbé Patizel, chancelier du consulat. Le lendemain M. Le Blond, consul de France, me donna un dîner où M. de Saint-Cyr et une partie de la nation françoise se trouva. Toutes les bourses me furent ouvertes, et j'y pris l'argent dont j'avois besoin, n'ayant pu être payé de mes appointements. Enfin je partis accompagné et fêté de tout le monde, tandis que l'ambassadeur, seul et abandonné dans son palais, y rongeoit son frein. M. Le Blond doit être maintenant à Paris, et peut attester tout cela: le chevalier de Carrion, alors mon confrère et mon ami, secrétaire de l'ambassadeur d'Espagne, et depuis secrétaire d'ambassade à Paris, y est peut-être encore, et peut attester la même chose; des foules de lettres et de témoins la peuvent attester: mais qu'importe à M. de Voltaire?

"Je n'ai jamais rien écrit ni signé de pareil à la déclaration que M. de Voltaire dit que M. de Montmollin a entre les mains signée de moi. On peut consulter là-dessus ma lettre du 8 août 1765, adressée à M. D—.

"Messieurs de Berne m'ayant chassé de leurs états en 1765 à l'entrée de l'hiver, le peu d'espoir de trouver nulle part la tranquillité dont j'avois si grand besoin, joint à ma foiblesse et au mauvais état de ma santé qui m'otoit le courage d'entreprendre un long voyage dans une saison si rude, m'engagea d'écrire à M. le bailli de Nidau une lettre qui a couru Paris, qui a arraché des larmes à tous les honnêtes gens, et des plaisanteries au seul M. de Voltaire.

"M. de Voltaire ayant dit publiquement à huit citoyens de Genève qu'il étoit faux que j'eusse jamais été secrétaire d'un ambassadeur, et que je n'avois été que son valet, un d'entre eux m'instruisit de ce discours; et, dans

le premier mouvement de mon indignation, j'envoyai à M. de Voltaire un démenti conditionnel dont j'ai oublié les termes, mais qu'il avoit assurément bien mérité.

"Je me souviens très-bien d'avoir une fois dit à quelqu'un que je me sentois le cœur ingrat, et que je n'aimois point les bienfaits; mais ce n'étoit pas après les avoir reçus que je tenois ce discours, c'étoit au contraire pour m'en défendre; et cela, monsieur, est très-différent. Celui qui veut me servir à sa mode et non pas à la mienne, cherche l'ostentation du titre de bienfaiteur, et je vous avoue que rien au monde ne me touche moins que de pareils soins. A voir la multitude prodigieuse de mes bienfaiteurs on doit me croire dans une situation bien brillante; j'ai pourtant beau regarder autour de moi, je n'y vois point les grands monuments de tant de bienfaits. Le seul vrai bien dont je jouis est la liberté; et ma liberté, grâce au ciel, est mon ouvrage. Quelqu'un s'ose-t-il vanter d'y avoir contribué? Vous seul, ô George Keith, pouvez le faire, et ce n'est pas vous qui m'accuserez d'ingratitude. J'ajoute à milord-maréchal, mon ami Dupeyrou; voilà mes vrais bienfaiteurs, je n'en connois point d'autres. Voulez-vous donc me lier par des bienfaits, faites qu'ils soient de mon choix, et non pas du vôtre, et soyez sûr que vous ne trouverez de la vie un cœur plus vraiment reconnoissant que le mien. Telle est ma façon de penser que je n'ai point déguisée: vous êtes jeune, vous pouvez la dire à vos amis; et si vous trouvez quelqu'un qui la blâme, ne vous fiez jamais à cet homme-là."

In connection with one charge made by Voltaire, that Rousseau had behaved to Helvétius in the same way that, without any sort of scruple, his brother authors behaved to him, by attacking him with adverse criticism, when he was pursued by judicial persecutors, Rousseau had, without knowing that the charge would be made against him, repudiated it in his *Letters from the Mountains*. He says there, that he had intended to

refute the arguments employed by the author of *De l'Esprit; when he heard that the book had been condemned to be burnt by the Parliament of Paris.* "Instantly," he affirmed, "I threw the pages I had written on the fire; judging that no consideration could excuse the baseness of joining the crowd that sought to overwhelm an honest man, who was oppressed." Rousseau never published any attack upon Helvétius: but his notes and comments jotted down upon his own copy of *De l'Esprit*, were reprinted amongst his posthumous works. The best way of establishing the entire falseness of the charge that he promised the pastor de Montmollin to attack Helvétius by way of inducing the minister to admit him to the sacred table, will be to reproduce the letter alluded to by Voltaire: where it will be observed the name of Helvétius does not occur.

Copie de la déclaration sur laquelle je fus admis à la communion, en 1762, *et que je confirme aujourd'hui, le* 29 *mars* 1765, *à Motier.*

"Monsieur, le respect que je vous porte, et mon devoir, comme votre paroissien, m'obligent, avant de m'approcher de la sainte table, de vous faire, de mes sentimens en matière de foi, une déclaration devenue nécessaire par l'étrange préjugé pris contre un de mes écrits.

"Il est fâcheux que les ministres de l'Évangile se fassent, en cette occasion, les vengeurs de l'Église romaine, faute d'avoir voulu m'entendre, ou faute même de m'avoir lu. Comme vous n'êtes pas, monsieur, dans ce cas-là, j'attends de vous un jugement plus équitable. Quoi qu'il en soit, l'ouvrage porte en soi tous les éclaircissemens; et comme je ne pourrais l'expliquer que par lui-même, je l'abandonne tel qu'il est, au blâme ou à l'approbation des sages, sans vouloir ni le défendre, ni le désavouer.

"Me bornant donc à ce qui regarde ma personne, je

vous déclare, monsieur, avec respect, que depuis ma réunion à l'Église dans laquelle je suis né, j'ai toujours fait, de la religion chrétienne réformée, une profession d'autant moins suspecte, que l'on n'exigeait de moi, dans le pays où j'ai vécu, que de garder le silence, et de laisser quelque doute à cet égard, pour jouir des avantages civils dont j'étais exclu par ma religion. Je suis attaché de bonne foi à cette religion véritable et sainte, et je le serai jusqu'à mon dernier soupir; je désire d'être toujours uni extérieurement à l'Église, comme je le suis dans le fond de mon cœur; et quelque consolant qu'il soit pour moi de participer à la communion des fidèles, je le désire, je vous proteste, autant pour leur édification, que pour mon propre avantage; car il n'est pas bon qu'on pense qu'un homme de bonne foi qui raisonne, ne peut être membre de Jésus-Christ."—*Jean Jacques Rousseau.*

"M. de Voltaire ajoute des faussetés plus hardies et plus odieuses dans ses notes sur la lettre à M. Hume," writes the author of *La Vie Polémique de Voltaire.* "Il dit, à l'occasion du passage que nous avons cité: 'Nonseulement la déclaration de J. J. Rousseau contre le livre de l'*Esprit* et contre ses amis, est entre les mains de M. de Montmollin, mais elle est imprimée dans un écrit de M. de Montmollin, intitulé: *Réfutation d'un Libelle*, page 90.' "On ne poussa peut-être jamais plus loin l'effronterie et l'imposture. Nous avons eu sous les yeux l'ouvrage que cite ici M. de Voltaire; il est divisé en deux parties: la première est une apologie de la conduite de Rousseau pendant son séjour à Motier-Travers; et la seconde est une réfutation de cette apologie. M. de Montmollin est l'auteur de cette seconde partie, où il s'efforce de justifier les torts qu'on lui impute à l'égard de M. Rousseau. Il rapporte plusieurs pièces, et entr'autres la déclaration dont parle M. de Voltaire, laquelle est entièrement conforme à celle que nous venons de transcrire."

Rousseau then was innocent of having united himself

with the persecutors of Helvétius. Was Voltaire, on his side, guiltless of any alliance with the persecutors of Rousseau? We shall discover if we examine into the facts, that he was, on the contrary, the first instigator of persecutions against the citizen of Geneva; and that it was no fault of his if Jean Jacques were not hunted out of France sixteen months before the Parliament of Paris issued its decree against *Emile*.

Voltaire's first savage attack upon Rousseau was in February 1761: almost immediately after the publication of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* appeared the *Lettres de Marquis de Ximenès*, and the *Prédiction tirée d'un vieux manuscrit*. This malicious pamphlet, afterwards reproduced in several newspapers, did not deliver a simple expression of opinion, that the novel which excited so much enthusiasm in the public was "pitiable," as a literary production:—But it denounced the author of the book (identified with the hero of the story) as "une espèce de valet suisse," who is a seducer of young girls, a preacher of immoral and odious doctrines subversive of family life, and an insulter of the French nation which has given him hospitality: in other words, *the purpose of this libel was to excite enmity and persecutions against Rousseau.*

To prove this by quotations presents a difficulty which meets the defender of Jean Jacques constantly, when the object is to make clear the odious malice of his persecutors. It is not possible to cite in any modern work the worst passages from these letters, nor from the *Prédiction*, nor yet from the *Guerre de Genève* —where the effort is made to paint the philosopher of simple habits and honest life in the guise of a loathsome monster, disfigured morally and physically by odious vices. This part of the libel must be taken for granted. But what remains, when their obscenities are omitted, sufficiently proves that the writer of the libel is not ridiculing or condemning the book, but working to stir up trouble for the author.

The first "Letter" might pass as severe, but justifiable, literary criticism. It attacks the style of the novel, and ends thus:

"Voila, monsieur, une partie des expressions sublimes qui m'ont frappé, dan le premier et le second volume de la *Nouvelle Héloïse* de J. J. Rousseau: ouvrage dans lequel cet homme se met si noblement au-dessus des règles de la langue et des bienséances et daigne y marquer un profond mépris pour notre nation. C'est un service qu'il nous rend puisqu'il nous corrigera. Permettez moi d'avoir l'honneur de vous dire ce que c'est que ce roman et vous verrez si le fond est digne du style."

SECONDE LETTRE

"Monsieur, qui ne connoît les aventures d'Héloïse et d'Abélard, qui ne sait que cet homme illustre balança toujours la réputation de S. Bernard, et quelquefois son crédit. Il eut un mérite très-rare, des foiblesses communes, des malheurs singuliers. Les amours et les lettres d'Abélard et d'Héloïse vivront éternellement.

Vivunt qui commissi calores
Helosiæ calamis puellæ.

"La vérité sur-tout met le sceau de l'immortalité aux lettres touchantes que ces deux amants s'écrivent. Elles ont été traduites en vers et en prose dans toutes les langues. Jean Jacques s'est mis à inventer cette ancienne histoire sous d'autres noms. Mais fâché qu'un homme aussi bien fait, et d'une figure aussi agréable qu'on nous peint Abélard, eût perdu dans le cours de ses amours le principal mérite de sa figure, il a retranché de son Roman cette particularité de l'histoire: et comme il est aussi grand, aussi noblement fait qu'Abélard; comme il est, ainsi que lui, l'objet des soupirs de toutes les dames de Paris, il s'est fait le héros de son Roman. Ce sont les aventures et les opinions de Jean Jacques,

qu'on lit dans la nouvelle Héloïse, et que malheureusement vous n'avez pas lues.

* * * * *

[Here follows a distorted version of the story, where the claim that mutual love and not family pride should be the authority for marriage is represented as an invitation to young girls to disobey and deceive their parents, and to bestow their favours on low-born admirers.]

"Toutes ces grandes aventures sont ornées de magnifiques lieux communs sur la vertu. Jamais catin ne prêcha plus, et jamais valet, suborneur de filles, ne fut plus philosophe. Jean-Jacques a trouvé l'heureux secret de mettre dans ce beau Roman de six Tomes trois à quatre pages de faits, et environ mille de discours moraux. Ce n'est ni Télémaque, ni la Princesse de Cleves, ni Zaïde : c'est Jean-Jacques tout pur.

[Jean Jacques' description of the afflicting contrast between the luxury and extravagance of the rich and the misery of the poor in Paris is pronounced exaggerated, and especially is it denied that the Paris workman eats black bread.]

"Il n'est pas plus content de nos hôtels, et de ce qui s'y passe, que des réduits des artisans. *De quelques sens*, dit-il, *qu'on envisage les choses, tout n'est ici que jargon ; l'honnête homme d'ici n'est point celui qui fait de bonnes actions, mais celui qui dit de belles choses.* Ah ! mon doux ami, crois au moins que ceux qui ont donné le couvert, le vêtement, la nourriture à un Seigneur étranger venu de Genève pensoient au moins faire une bonne action.[1]

"Si tu méprises si fort les grands et les petits, un Seigneur d'une figure aussi distinguée que la tienne, un homme couru de toutes les belles, devroit au moins épargner nos Dames. Non ; elles ne sont pas si maigres,

[1] No one had given "food, clothing, and shelter to the citizen of Geneva" in Paris. Rousseau had worked for Madame Dupin, for Diderot on his Encyclopædia, and as a copyist of music.

ni si tannées que tu le dis. Les Dames du pays de Vaud leur sont infiniment supérieures, nous le savons ; mais il reste encore quelques graces à nos Parisiennes. Tes beaux yeux n'ont pas tourné sur elles de favorables regards.[1] Quoi ! illustre amant de Julie, tu leur trouves le *maintien soldatesque, et le ton grenadier, depuis le fauxbourg S. Germain jusqu'aux halles.* O vous charmantes et respectables beautés ! qui peut-être portez dans vos cœurs les sentiments les plus tendres, mais qui portez sur vos visages enchanteurs les traits de la modestie ; vous dont la voix est aussi douce que les regards de vos yeux, vous seriez-vous attendues que le plus brillant Seigneur que nous ayons jamais eu à Paris, ne trouveroit dans vos *maigres* visages *que des faces de grenadiers !* Ah ! si quelque véritable grenadier apprenoit ! . . . mais non, il ne faut pas se fâcher contre Jean-Jacques.

"Que dis-je hélas ! on ne va se fâcher que trop : cachez-vous vîte, ou partez : pauvre malheureux ! Comment vous est-il échappé de dire qu'il y a vingt à parier contre un, *qu'un gentilhomme descend d'un fripon.* Ne savez-vous pas qu'un Montmorency, qui a l'honneur de vous loger, est un assez bon Gentilhomme ?[2]

"Nous avouons que votre père *qui porta un mois le mousquet*, comme vous le dites, sous le Général Sacconnay, alloit de pair avec les Montmorency, les Soubise, les Bouillon, les Châtillon, les Choiseul, les Tonnerre, les Beauveau, &c. Mais plus on est grand, mon ami, et plus il faut être modeste : ayant surtout quitté votre patrie, où vous avez joué un si grand rôle, étant devenu si à la mode parmi nous, et nous faisant l'honneur d'être depuis si long-temps notre compatriote, vous auriez dû ne pas dire *que la noblesse d'Angleterre est la plus brave de l'Europe ;* un gentilhomme tel que vous doit sentir que c'est-là un point bien délicat. Vous

[1] See. p. 209, vol. i. for description of women of the world.

[2] The Duke of Luxembourg did not lodge Rousseau, who lived at Mount Louis and paid rent for the house.

savez que le Roi a plus de Noblesse dans ses armées, que l'Angleterre n'a de soldats en Allemagne ; je serois fâché qu'it se trouvât quelque Garde de Sa Majesté, qui prit vos expressions à la lettre.

"Si Jean-Jacques attaque la Noblesse, il étoit de la prudence d'un philosophe, tel que lui, de ménager la robe : mais il s'en va mal à propos attaquer un arrêt du Parlement de Paris. Il trouve mauvais qu'on ait cassé un mariage qui n'étoit point fait selon les loix. *Ce chaste nœud de la nature n'est soumis ni au pouvoir souverain, ni à l'autorité paternelle ; mais à la seule autorité du père commun qui sait commander aux cœurs, et leur ordonnant de s'unir, les peut contraindre de s'aimer.*

"Telle est la décision de mon doux ami ; cela peut mener loin. La fille d'un Duc and Pair pourra, quand elle voudra, épouser à l'âge de quinze ans le fils du relieur des livres de Jean-Jacques, pour peu qu'il soit joli, et qu'il ait quelque teinture de philosophie, attendu l'égalité parfaite que mon doux ami admet entre les relieurs de livres, et les Pairs de France. Et lui-même, qui est orné des dons les plus séduisants de la nature, et dont le premier abord enchante, tournera la tête à quelque princesse, et fera un mariage tel que M. de Lauzun, sans que le Roi puisse y trouver à redire Car remarquez que M. de Lauzun étoit un homme de qualité ; qu'un simple Gentilhomme approche de ce rang ; qu'un Conseiller se croit égal à un Gentilhomme ; qu'un Officier municipal se croit égal à un Conseiller ; qu'un Citoyen de Genève se croit égal à un Officier municipal ; que par conséquent il n'y a nulle différence entre Jean-Jacques et le Comte de Lauzun qui épousa Mademoiselle ; qu'ainsi il est clair que mon doux ami épousera une Princesse du sang avant qu'il soit peu, et qu'il aura encore le plaisir de faire les vers et la musique de l'Epithalame."

QUATRIEME LETTRE

"Monsieur, Je frémis pour notre ami Jean-Jacques, je tremble pour ses jours. Il est vrai que le Clergé, la Noblesse, le Parlement et les Dames mêmes, n'ont fait que rire de ses injures et de ses systêmes: heureusement même pour lui, l'ennui que causent ses six volumes, est si prodigieux, que bien des gens qui auroient remarqué ses petites témérités, ont mieux aimé laisser-là le livre que de rechercher l'auteur; mais hier il arriva du scandale.

"Jean-Jacques, passant dans la rue, près de l'Opéra, fut arrêté par cinq ou six virtuoses de l'Orchestre, qui le traitèrent un peu rudement; il se sauva dans une maison dont la porte étoit ouverte, et grimpa à un de ces cinquièmes étages, où il dit qu'on apprend mieux qu'ailleurs à connoître les mœurs de la ville. Les violons montèrent après lui; Jean-Jacques se réfugia dans une chambre assez dérangée, où il trouva une Dame penchée négligemment sur un canapé un peu déchiré.

"C'étoit précisément la même Dame, chez laquelle il s'étoit consolé des tourments de l'absence. La Dame éperdue se jetta entre lui et les assaillants. 'Eh, mon Dieu!' leur dit-elle, 'Messieurs, pourquoi battez-vous ce magnifique Seigneur qui soupe chez moi quelquefois avec des officiers étrangers?'

"*Ah! coquin*, dit le premier violon, nous t'apprendons *si l'ennuyeux et lamentable chant François ressemble aux cris de la colique*, comme tu l'écris.—*Viens-ça*, dit l'autre, *celui que tu appelles le bucheron va frapper sur toi la mesure.*—Va, va, *la vache qui galoppe* t'attrapera, disoit un troisième. Un quatrième s'écrioit, *tu ne mangeras pas de l'oie grasse.*

"Pardon, Messieurs, dit mon doux ami, se jettant à genoux, je n'y retournerai plus, c'est une méprise de Suisse, je suis votre serviteur à tous; je fais moi-même de la musique Française, j'en ai copié toute ma vie.

'*Tu en es plus coupable,*' repliqua un des violons, en lui donnant un coup d'archet des plus forts sur le nez. La Dame jettoit les hauts cris; '*vous vous méprenez, Messieurs, c'est un Citoyen de Genève, vous dis-je.*' Les violons n'entendoient point raison, les coups d'archet pleuvoient; Jean-Jacques fuyoit dans tous les coins de la chambre; il se penchoit à la fenêtre pour ne recevoir les coups que sur son derrière. En se penchant, il apperçut un grand homme vêtu de noir, sec, décharné, la face allongée, le nez pointu, le corps plié en deux monté sur deux bâtons de cire noire, qu'on appelloit ses jambes, une main dans la poche et l'autre en l'air battant la mesure.

" A cette figure, Jean-Jacques reconnut Rameau. A mon secours! s'écria-t-il, mon bon Monsieur Rameau, à mon secours, l'Orchestre me tue, il a toujours fait mon supplice; à l'aide, au guet, au meurtre; faut-il avoir eu toute ma vie les oreilles écorchées par les filles de l'Opéra, pour expirer aujourd'hui sous les violons!

" Rameau monta paisiblement en fredonnant un air, et vint voir sur quel ton étoient les choses; il trouva les archets brisés, une grosse Dame en jupon sale, toute éplorée, et le nez du doux ami tout sanglant.

" Rameau, en maître souverain de l'Orchestre, fit ralentir la mesure: et après avoir écouté patiemment pour la prèmiere fois de la vie les violons de l'Opéra; '*ne vous fâchez pas,* leur dit-il, Messieurs, *c'est un pauvre fou, qui n'est pas si méchant qu'on le croit;* sa folie consiste dans les inconséquences, et dans une vanité dont aucun barbier n'approchera jamais. Il a fait une mauvaise Comédie, il a écrit contre la Comédie; il a publié que le Théâtre de Paris corrompoit les mœurs, il vient de donner au public un Roman d'Héloise ou d'Aloïse, dont plusieurs endroits feroient rougir Madame que voilà, si elle savoit lire. Il est allé à Genève abjurer la religion catholique pour vivre en France. Le pauvre homme a fait lui-même de la musique Française, que j'ai eu la bonté de corriger. Il a imprimé dans le Dictionnaire Encyclopédique quelques âneries sur l'harmonie, qu'il m'a fallu

encore relever ; et pour récompense il écrit contre moi. Il ne lui manque plus que d'être peintre, et d'écrire contre Van-Loo et contre Drouais ; il faut pardonner à un pauvre homme qui a le cerveau blessé. Il s'est mis dans un tonneau qu'il a cru être celui de Diogène et pense de-là être en droit de faire le cynique ; il crie de son tonneau aux passants, " *admirez mes haillons.*" La seule manière de le punir, est de ne regarder ni sa personne, ni son tonneau ; il vaut mieux l'ignorer que de le battre.'

" Ce discours sensé appaisa l'Orchestre, mais il ne corrigea pas Jean-Jacques.

" J'ai l'honneur d'être, etc., etc."

PREDICTION TIREE DUN VIEUX MANUSCRIT

" En ce temps il paroîtra en France un homme extraordinaire, venu des bords d'un Lac ; et il criera au peuple, Je suis possédé du Démon de l'enthousiasme ; j'ai reçu du Ciel le don de l'inconséquence ; je suis Philosophe, et Professeur du paradoxe.

Et la multitude courra sur ses pas, et plusieurs croiront en lui.

Et il leur dira : Vous êtes tous des scélérats et des fripons, vos femmes sont toutes des femmes perdues, et je viens vivre parmi vous. Et il abusera de la douceur naturelle de ce Peuple pour lui dire des injures absurdes.

Et il ajoutera, tous les hommes sont vertueux dans le pays où je suis né, et je n'habiterai jamais le pays où je suis né.

Et il soutiendra que les Sciences et les Arts corrompent nécessairement les mœurs ; et il écrira sur toutes sortes de Sciences et d'Arts.

Et il soutiendra que le Théâtre est une source de prostitution and de corruption ; et il fera des Opéra et des Comédies.

Et il écrira qu'il n'y a de vertu que chez les Sauvages quoiqu'il n'ait jamais été parmi les Sauvages.

Et semblable aux Empyriques, qui font exprès des blessures, pour montrer l'excellence de leur Baume, il empoisonnera les âmes pour avoir la gloire de les guérir, et le poison agira violemment sur l'esprit et sur le cœur ; et l'antidote n'opérera que sur l'esprit, et le poison triomphera.

Et il se vantera d'avoir ouvert un précipice, et il se croira exempt de tout reproche, en disant tant pis pour les jeunes filles qui y tomberont, je les ai averties dans ma Préface ; et les jeunes filles ne lisent jamais les Préfaces.

Et après que dans son Roman il aura dégradé tour à tour les Mœurs par la Philosophie, et la Philosophie par les Mœurs, il dira qu'il faut des Romans à un peuple corrompu.

Et il dira sans doute aussi, qu'il faut des Fripons chez un peuple corrompu.

Et on le laissera tirer la conséquence.

Et il dira encore, pour se justifier d'avoir fait un livre où respire le vice, qu'il vit dan un siècle où il n'est pas possible d'être bon.

Et pour s'excuser, il calomniera l'Univers entier.

Et il menacera de son mépris tous ceux qui n'estimeront pas son livre.

Et les gens vertueux considéreront sa folie d'un œil de pitié.

Et on ne l'appellera plus le Philosophe, et il sera nommé le plus éloquent des Sophistes."

In February 1761, this attack upon the author of a book almost universally admired, excited general indignation. Voltaire's style betrayed him, and indeed in the chosen circle of his friends and patrons he admitted his responsibility for the "Letters." On February 18, 1761, he wrote to the Count d'Argental :—

"*Tenez voilà encore des Lettres sur le Roman de Jean Jacques; mandez-moi qui les a faites, ô mes anges, qui avez le nez fin.*"

The same day he wrote to Damilaville: "J'envoie aux Frères une petite cargaison contenant un chant de la Pucelle et les Lettres sur la Nouvelle Héloïse ou Aloisa de Jean Jacques *auxquelles Monsieur le Marquis de Ximenès n'a fait nulle difficulté de mettre son nom.*"

By April 21 the outcry against these libellous Letters and the Prediction had rendered their true author less candid about his share in them; but ready to justify the attack made in them upon a man who had "libelled the nation which supported him," and *who had interfered with his, Voltaire's, right to give theatrical performances at Fernay.* The last part of Voltaire's letter to Damilaville is in reality his answer to his friends, who probably had blamed him for interfering with Rousseau. The reply is clear: "I tell you this impertinent creature, '*ce polisson*,' has dared to interfere with *me.*"

A M. DAMILAVILLE

"*A Ferney, le 22 d'avril.*

"Je suis le partisan de M. *Diderot*, parce qu'à ses profondes connaissances il joint le mérite de ne vouloir point jouer le philosophe, et qu'il l'a toujours été assez pour ne pas sacrifier à d'infames préjugés qui déshonorent la raison. Mais qu'un *Jean-Jacques*, un valet de *Diogène*, crie, du fond de son tonneau, contre la comédie, après avoir fait des comédies (et même détestables); que ce polisson ait l'insolence de m'écrire que je corromps les mœurs de sa patrie; qu'il se donne l'air d'aimer sa patrie (qui se moque de lui), qu'enfin, après avoir changé trois fois de religion, ce misérable fasse une brigue avec des prêtres sociniens de la ville de Genève, pour empêcher le peu de génevois qui ont des talens, de venir les exercer dans ma maison (laquelle n'est pas dans le petit territoire de Genève): tous ces traits rassemblés forment le portrait du fou le plus

méprisable que j'aye jamais connu. M. le marquis de *Ximenès* a daigné s'abaisser jusqu'à couvrir de ridicule son ennuyeux et impertinent roman. Ce roman est un libelle fort plat contre la nation qui donne à l'auteur de quoi vivre ; et ceux qui ont traité les quatre jolies lettres de M. de *Ximenès* de libelle, ont extravagué. Un homme de condition est au moins en droit de réprimer l'insolence d'un *J. J.*, qui imprime qu'*il y a vingt contre un à parier que tout gentilhomme descend d'un fripon.*

" Voilà, mon cher monsieur, ce que je pense hautement, et ce je vous prie de dire à M. *Diderot.* Il ne doit pas être à se repentir d'avoir apostrophé ce pauvre homme comme un grande homme, et de s'être écrié : *ô Rousseau !* dans un dictionnaire. Il se trouve, à fin de compte, que *ô Rousseau !* ne signifie que *ô insensé !* Il faut connaître ses gens avant de leur prodiguer des louanges. J'écris tout ceci pour vous.

" Vous me trouverez un peu de mauvaise humeur, mais comment voulez-vous que je ne sois pas outré ? Je bâtis un joli théâtre à Ferney, et il se trouve un *Jean Jacques*, dans un village de France, qui se ligue avec deux coquins, prêtres calvinistes, pour empêcher un bon acteur de jouer chez moi. *J. J.* prétend qu'il ne convient pas à la dignité d'un horloger de Genève, de jouer *Cinna* chez moi avec mademoiselle *Corneille.* Le polisson ! le polisson ! S'il vient au pays, je le ferai mettre dans un tonneau, avec la moitié d'un manteau sur son vilain petit corps à bonnes fortunes.

" Pardonnez à ma colère, monsieur, vous qui n'aimez point les enthousiastes hypocrites."

The Prediction and the Letters,—which " the Marquis de Ximenès " made no difficulty about putting his name to—did not injure the author of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* in the hour of the book's triumphant success. But can it be maintained (when the legal penalties then in force against writers and publishers of books containing

dangerous doctrines are remembered) that Voltaire did not use his best endeavours to stir up persecutions for an author he denounced as a corrupter of morals, a poisoner of souls, and an insulter of the French nation, in that he attacked its nobles, its magistrates, its women, its artists, its institutions, and its people, attributing to them all (by this critic's account) odious characteristics? But what was Voltaire's conduct the following year, when persecution actually overtook the author of *Emile?*— Did he forget old grudges, and, as he himself affirmed positively on different occasions, offer the persecuted man of letters a refuge at Fernay, and undertake his defence at Geneva? or did he, as not only Rousseau himself but Lord-Marshal Keith believed, use his influence to stir up suspicions and animosities against Rousseau, both at Geneva and amongst the Senators of Berne?

Turning to Voltaire's correspondence, we discover in the tone of his allusions to the different edicts of expulsion and condemnations issued against the author of *Emile*, an undisguised satisfaction at his ill-treatment that certainly indicates sympathy with his persecutors, if it does not positively convict the writer as their accomplice. In any case, these letters prove that Voltaire neither offered Rousseau a retreat at Fernay, nor undertook his defence.

On the 22nd June 1762, that is to say, almost immediately after he heard of the sentence against Rousseau, Voltaire wrote to the Duc de Richelieu to assure him that he neither sympathized with Jean Jacques nor shared his opinions, either in connection with his *Projet de la Paix Perpetuelle*, nor with his condemned *Treatise on Education*, nor with the *Contrat Social*.

A M. LE MARÉCHAL DUC DE RICHELIEU

"*A Genève, le* 22 *de juin.*

"Ma misérable santé, monseigneur, me confine à présent auprès du docteur *Tronchin*. Je me joins à la foule de ses dévots qui vont au temple d'Epidaure. Je vous assure que quoique je sois dans la patrie de *J. J. Rousseau*, je trouve que vous avez très-grande raison, et je ne suis point du tout de son avis.

"Je me flatte que vous distinguez les gens de lettres de Paris de ce philosophe des petites-maisons ; mais vous savez que, dans la littérature comme dans les autres états, il y a un peu de jalousie. On accusait *Corneille* d'avoir favorisé le duel, et d'avoir violé toutes les bienséances dans le Cid ; on reprochait à *Racine* d'avoir mis les principes du jansénisme dans le rôle de *Phèdre* ; *Descartes* fut accusé d'athéisme, et *Gassendi* d'épicuréisme : la mode aujourd'hui, est de prétendre que les géomètres et les métaphysiciens inspirent à la nation le dégoût des armes, et que, si on a été battu sur terre et sur mer, c'est évidemment la faute des philosophes. Mais vous savez que les Anglais sont bien plus philosophes que nous, et que cela ne les a pas empêchés de nous battre."

A M. DAMILAVILLE

"*Le* 25 *de juin.*

"Les frères des Délices ont reçu les lettres du 19 de juin de leur cher frère. Ils chercheront le *Contrat social :* ce petit livre a été brûlé à Genève dans le même bûcher que le fade roman d'*Emile ;* et *J. J.* a été décrété de prise de corps comme à Paris. Ce *Contrat social* ou insocial n'est remarquable que par quelques injures dites grossièrement aux rois par le citoyen du bourg de Genève, et par quatre pages insipides contre la religion chrétienne. Ces quatre pages ne sont que des centons de *Bayle*. Ce n'était pas la peine d'être

plagiaire. L'orgueilleux *Jean-Jacques* est à Amsterdam, où l'on fait plus de cas d'une cargaison de poivre que de ses paradoxes."

A M. DE CIDEVILLE

"*Aux Délices, le* 21 *de juillet.*

"*Jean-Jacques*, qui a écrit à la fois contre les prêtres et contre les philosophes, a été brûlé à Genève dans la personne de son plat *Emile*, et banni du canton de Berne où il s'était réfugié. Il est à présent entre deux rochers, dans le pays de Neuchâtel, croyant toujours avoir raison, et regardant les humains en pitié. Je crois que la chienne d'*Erostrate*, ayant rencontré le chien de *Diogène*, fit des petits dont *J. J.* est descendu en droite ligne."

A M. DAMILAVILLE

"26 *juillet.*

"La véritable philosophie, n'est pas celle de *Jean-Jacques*. Ce pauvre chien de *Diogène* n'a pu trouver de loge dans le pays de Berne; il s'est retiré dans celui de Neuchâtel: c'était bien la peine d'aboyer contre les philosophes et contre les spectacles."

Before examining how much truth there was in Voltaire's bitter complaint that Rousseau played the part of an informer, and denounced him as the author of an anonymous blasphemous attack upon Christianity, entitled *Le Sermon des Cinquantes*, it has to be realized that a year before the publication of the *Letters from the Mountain* appeared, Voltaire had endeavoured to pass off upon the proscribed author of *Emile* the responsibility of a work that it was perilous to be suspected of having written; and that actually treated the founder of Christianity with a disrespect Rousseau esteemed both outrageous and revolting. Two letters in Rousseau's correspondence explain how maliciously the true author

of the *Sermon* had designed to play off this trick upon him by sending in his name the *Sermon des Cinquantes* to a lady who had asked Voltaire to forward a letter to Rousseau. By a fortunate accident the lady in question suspected the fraud, and wrote to Rousseau through another envoy. His answer to this letter is dated December 1763. On March 11, 1764, he relates the incident to the Prince of Wirtemberg, who had written to ask him whether there was any truth in the report that he was about to publish a volume of short tales. In his letter to *Madame de B——*, it appears evident that Rousseau was not at all sure of the good faith of his correspondent; but a few months later when writing to the Prince of Wirtemberg he appears to have obtained proofs of her truthfulness.

A MADAME DE B.

"*Décembre* 1763.

"Je n'ai rien, madame, à vous dire sur le jugement que vous avez porté de la probité de M. de Voltaire; je vous dirai seulement que je n'ai point reçu la lettre que vous lui avez adressée pour moi, et que je n'ai envoyé ni à vous ni à personne l'imprimé intitulé: *Sermon des cinquante*, que je n'ai même jamais vu. Du reste il me paroît bizarre que, pour me faire parvenir une lettre, vous vous soyez adressée au chef de mes persécuteurs.

"A l'égard des doutes que vous pouvez avoir, madame, sur certains points de la religion, pourquoi vous adressez-vous, pour les lever, à un homme qui n'en est pas exempt lui-même? Si malheureusement les vôtres tombent sur les principes de vos devoirs, je vous plains; mais s'ils n'y tombent pas, de quoi vous mettez-vous en peine? Vous avez une religion qui dispense de tout examen; suivez-la en simplicité de cœur. C'est le meilleur conseil que je puis vous donner, et je le prends autant que je peux pour moi-même.

"Recevez, madame, mes salutations et mon respect."

A M. LE PRINCE L. E. DE WIRTEMBERG

"11 *mars*, 1764.

"Qui, moi, des contes? à mon âge et dans mon état? Non, prince, je ne suis plus dans l'enfance, ou plutôt je n'y suis pas encore; et malheureusement je ne suis pas si gai dans mes maux que Scarron l'étoit dans les siens. Je dépéris tous les jours; j'ai des comptes à rendre, et point de contes à faire. Ceci m'a bien l'air d'un bruit préliminaire répandu par quelqu'un qui veut m'honorer d'une gentillesse de sa façon. Divers auteurs, non contents d'attaquer mes sottises, se sont mis à m'imputer les leurs. Paris est inondé d'ouvrages qui portent mon nom, et dont on a soin de faire des chefs-d'œuvre de bêtise, sans doute afin de mieux tromper les lecteurs. Vous n'imagineriez jamais quels coups détournés on porte à ma réputation, à mes mœurs, à mes principes. En voici un qui vous fera juger des autres.

"Tous les amis de M. de Voltaire répandent à Paris qu'il s'intéresse tendrement à mon sort (et il est vrai qu'il s'y intéresse). Ils font entendre qu'il est avec moi dans la plus intime liaison. Sur ce bruit, une femme qui ne me connoît point me demande par écrit quelques éclaircissements sur la religion, et envoie sa lettre à M. de Voltaire, le priant de me la faire passer. M. de Voltaire garde la lettre qui m'est adressée, et renvoie à cette dame, comme en réponse, le Sermon des Cinquante. Surprise d'un pareil envoi de ma part, cette femme m'écrit par une autre voie; et voilà comment j'apprends ce qui s'est passé."

We have now to weigh how much reality belonged to Voltaire's simulated indignation against the author of the *Letters from the Mountain* for the extraordinarily restrained and dignified reproof—administered by him to the inconsistent denouncer of persecutors and persecutions. When reading the passage complained of by

Voltaire, it must be remembered that it was not to Rousseau himself, but to his fellow-citizens, who had formulated the protest against his sentence, that the Procureur Général was replying, in the phrase quoted in italics: which professes to answer the complaint that when so many irreligious books were tolerated at Geneva, for instance Voltaire's, it was unjust that Rousseau's defence of natural religion should be condemned.

Rousseau quotes:—

"*En conscience, y a-t-il parité entre des livres où l'on trouve quelques traits épars et indiscrets contre la religion, et des livres où, sans détour, sans ménagement, on l'attaque dans ses dogmes, dans sa morale, dans son influence sur la société ?*"

"En conscience! . . . Il ne siéroit pas à un impie tel que moi d'oser parler de conscience . . . surtout vis-à-vis de ces bons chrétiens . . . ainsi je me tais. . . . C'est pourtant une singulière conscience que celle qui fait dire à des magistrats, Nous souffrons volontiers qu'on blasphème, mais nous ne souffrons pas qu'on raisonne! Otons, monsieur, la disparité des sujets; c'est avec ces mêmes façons de penser que les Athéniens applaudissoient aux impiétés d'Aristophane, et firent mourir Socrate.

"Une des choses qui me donnent le plus de confiance dans mes principes, est de trouver leur application toujours juste dans les cas que j'avois le moins prévus; tel est celui qui se présente ici. Une des maximes qui découlent de l'analyse que j'ai faite de la religion et de ce qui lui est essentiel, est que les hommes ne doivent se mêler de celle d'autrui qu'en ce qui les intéresse; d'où il suit qu'ils ne doivent jamais punir des offenses [1]

[1] Notez que je me sers de ce mot *offenser Dieu*, selon l'usage, quoique je sois très-éloigné de l'admettre dans son sens propre, et que je le trouve très-mal appliqué; comme si quelque être que ce soit, un homme, un ange, le diable même, pouvoit jamais offenser Dieu! Le mot que nous rendons par *offenses* est traduit comme

faites uniquement à Dieu, qui saura bien les punir lui-même. *Il faut honorer la Divinité, et ne la venger jamais*, disent, après Montesquieu, les représentants, ils ont raison. Cependant les ridicules outrageants, les impiétés grossières, les blasphèmes contre la religion, sont punissables, jamais les raisonnements. Pourquoi cela, parce que, dans ce premier cas, on n'attaque pas seulement la religion, mais ceux qui la professent : on les insulte, on les outrage dans leur culte, on marque un mépris révoltant pour ce qu'ils respectent, et par conséquent pour eux. De tels outrages doivent être punis par les lois, parce qu'ils retombent sur les hommes, et que les hommes ont droit de s'en ressentir. Mais où est le mortel sur la terre qu'un raisonnement doive offenser? où est celui qui peut se fâcher de ce qu'on le traite en homme, et qu'on le suppose raisonnable ? Si le raisonneur se trompe ou nous trompe, et que vous vous intéressiez à lui ou à nous, montrez-lui son tort, désabusez-nous, battez-le de ses propres armes. Si vous n'en voulez pas prendre la peine, ne dites rien, ne l'écoutez pas, laissez-le raisonner ou déraisonner, et tout est fini sans bruit, sans querelle, sans insulte quelconque pour qui que ce soit. Mais sur quoi peut-on fonder la maxime contraire de tolérer la raillerie, le mépris, l'outrage, et de punir la raison ? la mienne s'y perd.

" Ces messieurs voient si souvent M. de Voltaire : comment ne leur a-t-il point inspiré cet esprit de tolér-

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presque tout le reste du texte sacré ; c'est tout dire. Des hommes enfarinés de leur théologie ont rendu et défiguré ce livre admirable selon leurs petites idées ; et voilà de quoi l'on entretient la folie et le fanatisme du peuple. Je trouve très-sage la circonspection de l'Eglise romaine sur les traductions de l'Ecriture en langue vulgaire ; et comme il n'est pas nécessaire de proposer toujours au peuple les méditations voluptueuses du Cantique des cantiques, ni les malédictions continuelles de David contre ses enmemis, ni les subtilités de saint Paul sur la grâce, il est dangereux de lui proposer la sublime morale de l'Evangile dans des termes qui ne rendent pas exactement le sens de l'auteur ; car, pour peu qu'on s'en écarte en prenant une autre route, on va très-loin.

ance qu'il prêche sans cesse, et dont il a quelquefois besoin! S'ils l'eussent un peu consulté dans cette affaire, il me paroît qu'il eût pu leur parler à peu près ainsi:

"'Messieurs, ce ne sont point les raisonneurs qui font du mal, ce sont les cafards. La philosophie peut aller son train sans risque; le peuple ne l'entend pas ou la laisse dire, et lui rend tout le dédain qu'elle a pour lui. Raisonner, est de toutes les folies des hommes celle qui nuit le moins au genre humain; et l'on voit même des gens sages entichés parfois de cette folie-là. Je ne raisonne pas, moi, cela est vrai; mais d'autres raisonnent: quel mal en arrive-t-il? Voyez tel, tel et tel ouvrage: n'y a-t-il que des plaisanteries dans ces livres-là? Moi-même enfin, si je ne raisonne pas, je fais mieux, je fais raisonner mes lecteurs. Voyez mon chapitre des Juifs; voyez le même chapitre plus développé dans le Sermon des Cinquante: il y a là du raisonnement, ou l'équivalent, je pense. Vous conviendrez aussi qu'il y a peu de *détour*, et quelque chose de plus que *des traits épars et indiscrets.*

"'Nous avons arrangé que mon grand crédit à la cour et ma toute-puissance prétendue vous serviroient de prétexte pour laisser courir en paix les jeux badins de mes vieux ans: cela est bon; mais ne brûlez pas pour cela des écrits plus graves, car alors cela seroit trop choquant.

"'J'ai tant prêché la tolérance! Il ne faut pas toujours l'exiger des autres, et n'en jamais user avec eux. Ce pauvre homme croit en Dieu; passons-lui cela, il ne fera pas secte: il est ennuyeux, tous les raisonneurs le sont: nous ne mettrons pas celui-ci de nos soupers; du reste, que nous importe? Si l'on brûloit tous les livres ennuyeux, que deviendroient les bibliothéques? et si l'on brûloit tous les gens ennuyeux, il faudroit faire un bûcher du pays. Croyez-moi, laissons raisonner ceux qui nous laissent plaisanter; ne brûlons ni gens ni livres, et restons en paix; c'est mon avis.' Voilà, selon

moi, ce qu'eût pu dire d'un meilleur ton M. de Voltaire; et ce n'eût pas été là, ce me semble, le plus mauvais conseil qu'il auroit donné."

Here, then, was the only passage in Rousseau's writings which Voltaire could quote to justify his furious indignation against Jean Jacques as a treacherous informer; "un délateur;" and a "monster," and a denouncer of a brother philosopher! Voltaire's claim to feel this righteous anger against an imaginary breach of the binding brotherhood between philosophers and men of letters where he himself was concerned, did not prevent him from playing in reality the secret informer's part on this occasion. M. Gustave Desnoirreterres testifies to having verified in the Archives of Geneva, at the No. 4890 of the Registers at the date January 12, 1765, Voltaire's denunciation of the *Letters from the Mountain* addressed to the Council in the following terms:—

"Je suis obligé d'avertir le Magnifique Conseil de Genève que parmi les libelles pernicieuses dont cette ville est inondé depuis quelque temps, il arrive lundi prochain chez le libraire Chirol Les Lettres de la Montagne imprimés à Amsterdam chez Marc Michel Rey."

It has been seen that *Le Sentiment des Citoyens* appeared almost in the same hour that the *Letters of the Mountain* were burnt by the public executioner. That infamous libel, however, did not satisfy Voltaire's vindictive rage against Rousseau for his audacity in venturing to remind him that he ought to practise himself the tolerance he so loudly preached. On March 12, 1765, appeared another libel circulated at Neuchâtel, and amongst the populace of Motiers, and professing to be the comment upon a crime perpetrated by a young man corrupted by Rousseau's doctrines. This libel, known to be due to Voltaire, was entitled *Le Préservatif.* It concluded, after the relation of the crime of the supposed poisoner, who was Jean Jacques' disciple:—

"Certes l'auteur de tant de pernicieux écrits est plus

empoisonneur que celui qui a fait périr par l'arsenic sa maîtresse et son fils. Il n'a fait qu'un crime : mais l'auteur est coupable de tous les crimes qui se commettront. Ceux qui le liront diront avec lui : 'je suis un être solitaire ; personne ne me doit rien ; et je ne dois rien à personne : je puis me défaire sans remords de tout être qui nuit à mon repos, comme on écrase un insecte.' Quelle est la faiblesse des hommes ! De miserables romans, sans invention, sans imagination, sans art, ont trouvé des lecteurs, uniquement parce qu'ils détruisent la société sans laquelle nous ne pouvons vivre ! Heureusement les honnêtes gens de tous les pays les ont vus avec exécration. L'auteur, partout proscrit, partout poursuivi, est semblable a cette hyène qui court dans les contrés méridionales de la France, contre laquelle les communautés s'arment, et qui n'a encore dévoré que les enfants. Ainsi les magistrats de tous les pays ont proscrit le malheureux Jean Jacques Rousseau ; et il n'a prévalu que sur de faibles jeunes gens. Il n'y a peut être sur la terre de condition plus malheureuse que celle d'un pareil homme. Il devient l'ennemi de tous les hommes ; il n'ose réflêchir sur sa situation sans effroi. La compagnie des honnêtes gens lui est interdite. Tel père de famille ne souffrirait pas que son fils lui parlât : nul magistrat ne voudrait le recevoir dans sa maison ; tout asile lui est interdit. Que cet exemple fasse, au moins, impression sur l'esprit des jeunes gens : qu'ils contemplent l'abime ; et qu'il s'en éloigne."

Le Sentiment des Citoyens was for the bourgeois, *Le Préservatif* for the common people—the libel contrived for the entertainment and instruction of men and women of good society was *La Guerre de Genève.*

But before giving any extracts from this venomous satire, read by Voltaire himself to his favoured guests, other letters must be quoted in proof of the fact that this malicious literature was not intended only to influence opinions, but was deliberately employed with

the purpose of provoking persecutions against a man denounced as a peril to society.

In October 1765 the writer described by the author of the *Sentiment des Citoyens* and of *Le Préservatif*, as proscribed and hunted from the society of honest men, a "hyæna" against whom decent folks took up arms, or whom at any rate they pelted with stones, was invited by the King of Prussia to take up his abode near him, and in January 1766 he was entertained by the Prince de Conti in Paris, and made, much against his will, the favourite of the hour during the three weeks he remained there. All this was very exasperating to Voltaire. In the very time when Rousseau, still under sentence of arrest, was permitted, through the special interest employed in his favour, to pass a few weeks in France on his way to England, and when Grimm represented him as abusing this favour and braving the Government by holding a sort of court in the apartments of the Prince de Conti, and by promenading the streets of Paris in his Armenian costume, Voltaire seized the opportunity of writing to the Minister who had Rousseau's destiny in his hand, the Duc de Choiseul, to inform him that Jean Jacques was responsible for all the trouble that was causing civil war in the Republic of Geneva.

A M. LE DUC DE CHOISEUL

"*Jan.* 1766.

"Mon Colonel, Mon Protecteur Messala, c'est pour le coup que je me jette très-sérieusement à vos pieds ; ayez la bonté de lire jusqu'au bout.

"Je vous dois tout, car c'est vous qui avez rendu ma petite terre libre ; c'est vous qui avez marié mademoiselle *Corneille*, et qui avez tiré son père de la misère, par les générosités du roi, et les vôtres, et celles de madame la duchesse de *Grammont*.

"C'est par vous que mon désert horrible a été changé en un séjour riant, que le nombre des habitans est triplé

ainsi que celui des charrues, et que la nature est changée dans ce coin qui était le rebut de la terre. Après ces bienfaits répandus sur moi, vous savez que je ne vous ai rien demandé que pour des génevois ; car que puis-je demander pour moi-même ? je n'ai que des grâces à vous rendre.

" *Jean-Jacques Rousseau* seul a troublé la paix de Genève et la mienne ; *Jean-Jacques*, le précepteur des rois et ministres, qui a imprimé, dans son *Contrat insocial*, qu'*il n'y a, à la cour de France, que de petits fripons qui obtiennent de petites places par de petites intrigues ; Jean-Jacques* qui veut que l'héritier du royaume épouse la fille du bourreau, si elle est jolie ; *Jean-Jacques* qui s'imagine follement que j'avais engagé le conseil de Genève à le proscrire ; *Jean-Jacques* qui s'appuya d'un colonel réformé au service de Savoie, et pensionnaire d'Angleterre, nommé M. *Pictet*, pour commencer, sur cet unique fondement, la guerre ridicule que Genève fait à coups de plume depuis deux années.

" Peut-être les Génevois, honteux d'un si impertinent sujet de discorde, n'ont osé avouer cette turpitude à M. le chevalier de *Beauteville ;* et moi, qui ne peut sortir, et qui passe la moitié de ma vie dans mon lit, et l'autre en robe de chambre, je n'ai pu instruire monsieur l'ambassadeur de ces fadaises, dans le peu de temps qu'il a daigné venir voir ma retraite.

" A la mort de M. de *Montpéroux*, toutes les têtes de Genève étaient dans une fermentation d'autant plus grande, qu'il n'y avait en vérité aucun sujet de querelle. Des animosités, des aigreurs réciproques, de l'orgueil, de la vanité, de petits droits contestés, ont brouillé tout le corps de l'Etat pour jamais. Quelques personnes du conseil, plusieurs principaux citoyens vinrent me trouver : je leur proposai de venir tous dîner chez moi souvent, et de vider leurs querelles gaiement, le verre à la main. Comme ils disputaient alors sur des questions de loi qui sont survenues, ou plutôt qu'on a fait survenir, j'envoyai

un mémoire à des avocats de Paris, et je reçus une consultation fort sage.

" M. *Hénin* arriva ; je lui remis la consultation, et je ne me mêlai plus de rien.

" Les natifs de Genève vinrent me trouver, il y a quelques jours, et me prièrent de leur faire un compliment qu'ils devaient présenter à messieurs les médiateurs ; je ne pus ni ne dus refuser cette légère complaisance à trente personnes qui me la demandaient en corps : un compliment n'est pas une affaire d'Etat. Ils revinrent après me communiquer une requête qu'ils voulaient donner à messieurs les plénipotentiaires ; je leur recommandai de ne choquer ni leurs supérieurs ni leurs égaux. Je n'ai eu aucune autre part aux divisions qui agitent la petite fourmilière. Je demeure à deux lieues de Genève, j'acheve mes jours dans la plus profonde retraite. Il ne m'appartient pas de dire mon avis, quand des plénipotentiaires doivent décider.

" Soyez donc très-persuadé, mon protecteur, qu'à mon âge je ne cherche à entrer dans aucune affaire, et sur-tout dans les tracasseries génevoises.

" Mais je dois vous dire que mes petites terres étant enclavées en partie dans leur petit territoire, ayant continuellement des droits de censive, et de chasse, et de dixième à discuter avec eux, ayant du bien dans la ville et même un bien inaliénable, j'ai plus d'intérêt que personne à voir la fourmilière tranquille et heureuse. *Je suis sûr qu'elle ne le sera jamais que quand vous daignerez être son protecteur principal, et qu'elle recevra des lois de votre médiation permanente.* Je vous conjure seulement de vouloir bien avoir la bonté de recommander à M. de *Beauteville* votre décrépite marmotte qui vous adorera du culte d'hyperdulie, tant que le peu qu'il a de corps sera conduit par le peu qu'il a d'âme.

" Monseigneur fait-il ce que c'est que le culte d'hyperdulie ? pour moi, il y a soixante ans que je cherche ce que c'est qu'une âme, et je n'en sais encore rien. V.

"*Ah! si j'osais, je vous supplierais d'engager M. de* Beauteville *à demeurer, en vertu de la garantie, le maître de juger toutes les contestations qui s'élèveront toujours à Genève. Vous seriez en droit d'envoyer un jour, à l'amiable, une bonne garnison pour maintenir la paix, et de faire de Genève, à l'amiable, une bonne place d'armes, quand vous aurez la guerre en Italie. Genève dépendrait de vous, à l'amiable; mais. . . .*"

In January 1767, Rousseau, in exile at Wootton, and estranged from many of his old enthusiasts after the quarrel with Hume, still counted his admirers and defenders in France. The poet Dorat composed in this month some verses in his honour; where Voltaire also was praised,—but blamed at the same time for inconsistency with his own principles in connection with his treatment of Rousseau. Voltaire's reply to Dorat, who had sent him these verses with a conciliatory letter, reveals not only his hardly-disguised bribe to the poet's vanity to give up Rousseau, in return for the influence that might in this case be used to get him into the academy, but also the extravagant attempt to represent the isolated and broken-hearted Jean Jacques in England, as a conspirator guilty of criminal manœuvres in France! Rousseau's "accomplice" spoken of by Voltaire, who had been arrested in Paris, was no doubt the bookseller Guy; sent by the Duc de Choiseul to the Bastille for some unexplained offence; which the author of the *Dialogues* has been called mad for supposing was the publication of Madame de la Tour's reply to the *Succinct Exposure* of David Hume.

A M. DORAT

"*Du* 28 *de janvier.*

"La rigueur extrême de la saison, monsieur, a trop augmenté mes souffrances continuelles pour me permettre de répondre, aussitôt que je l'aurais voulu, à votre lettre du 14 de janvier. L'état douloureux où je

suis a été encore augmenté par l'extrême disette où la cessation de tout commerce avec Genève nous a réduits. Ma situation, devenue très-désagréable, ne m'a pas assurément rendu insensible aux jolis vers dont vous avez semé votre lettre. Il aurait été encore plus doux pour moi, je vous l'avoue, que vous eussiez employé vos talens aimables à répandre dans le public les sentimens dont vous m'avez honoré dans vos lettres particulières. Personne n'a été plus pénétré que moi de votre mérite; personne n'a mieux senti combien vous feriez d'honneur un jour à l'académie française qui cherche, comme vous savez, à n'admettre dans son corps que des hommes qui pensent comme vous. J'y ai quelques amis, et ces amis ne sont pas assurément contens de la conduite de *Rousseau*, et le sont très-peu de ses ouvrages. M. d'*Alembert* et M. *Marmontel* n'ont pas à se louer de lui.

"Vous savez d'ailleurs que M. le duc de *Choiseul* n'est que trop informé des manœuvres lâches et criminelles de cet homme; vous savez que son complice a été arrêté dans Paris. J'ignore, après tout cela, comment vous avez appelé du nom de grand-homme un charlatan qui n'est connu que par des paradoxes ridicules et par une conduite coupable."

It was only twelve days after this letter to Dorat, that Voltaire sent the Duc de Choiseul the libellous *Guerre de Genève*, by way of confirming the minister in his belief in the fabulous "manœuvres" of the defenceless exile in England; who in his "weariness and despair" was already turning yearning eyes towards France.

A M. LE DUC DE CHOISEUL

"*A Ferney*, 20 *de février.*

"Monseigneur,—J'ai reçu les deux lettres dont vous m'avez honoré, avec un passe-port général, mais non pas dans leur temps; parce que vos bontés ne me sont parvenues que les cascades de la dragonnade.

"Je vous ai envoyé le discours de M. de la *Harpe* qui a remporté le prix à l'académie. La justice qu'il vous a rendue a beaucoup contribué à lui faire remporter ce prix. Son ouvrage a été applaudi de tout le public.

"Je suis pénétré de vos bontés, elles font ma consolation dans mes misères. M. le chevalier de *Jaucourt* ne m'a vu qu'aveugle et malade. J'étais mort, si je ne m'étais pas égayé aux dépens de *Jean Jacques*, de la demoiselle *le Vasseur* et de *Catherine*.

"Je me mets à vos pieds avec la plus tendre reconnaissance et le plus profond respect."

Here are some extracts from the *Guerre de Genève* with the comments upon them of the author of the *Vie Polémique de M. de Voltaire.*

"Où Voltaire se surpasse, c'est dans son poëme intitulé: *la Guerre de Genève.* Écoutons sa muse helvétique; elle nous dira de jolies choses.

"Dans un vallon fort bien nommé [1] *Travers*,
S'élève un mont, vrai séjour des hivers.
Son front altier se perd dans les nuages;
Ses fondemens sont au creux des enfers.[2]
Au pied du mont sont des antres sauvages,
Du Dieu du jour ignorés à jamais;
C'est de Rousseau le digne et noir palais.
Là se tapit ce sombre énergumène,
Cet ennemi de la nature humaine.
Pétri d'orgueil et dévoré de fiel,
Il fuit le monde et craint de voir le ciel;
Et cependant sa triste et vilaine âme,
Du Dieu d'amour a ressenti la flamme.
Il a trouvé pour charmer son ennui,
Une beauté digne en effet de lui.
C'était Caron amoureux de Mégère.
Une infernale et hideuse sorcière,
Suit en tous lieux le magot ambulant,
Comme chouette est jointe au chat-huant.

[1] L'allusion n'est-elle pas d'un grand goût?

[2] Pensée recopiée d'après lui-même, qui l'avait prise pour la première fois dans Virgile.

Æsculus imprimis quæ tantùm vertice ad auras
Æthereas, tantùm radices in Tartara tendit. (Georg.)

L'infame vieille avait pour nom *Vachine;*
C'est sa Circé, sa Didon, son Alcine.
L'aversion pour la terre et les cieux,
Tient lieu d'amour à ce couple odieux.
* * * * * *
Dans leurs transports ils se pâment soudain
Du seul plaisir de nuire au genre humain."

Nous laissons au lecteur à juger ce morceau. Nous dirons seulement qu'en le transcrivant, nous avons éprouvé un dégoût qui, je crois, est bien naturel. Certes, il est bien digne de *Diogène* et de *l'Arétin.* Dans un autre endroit où *Robert Covelle* se désole de la mort de sa maîtresse, le poëte met dans la bouche de Jean-Jacques Rousseau cette admirable consolation :

"Rousseau, réplique, as-tu perdu l'esprit?
As-tu le cœur si lâche et si petit?
Aurais-tu bien cette faiblesse infame,
De t'abaisser à pleurer une femme?
Sois sage enfin : le sage est sans pitié ;
Il n'est jamais séduit par l'amitié.
Tranquille et dur en son orgueil suprême,
Vivant pour soi, sans besoin, sans désir.
Semblable à Dieu, concentré dans lui-même,
Dans son mérite il met tout son plaisir. . . ."

On conviendra que la consolation est vraiment philosophique ; mais M. de Voltaire ne décèle-t-il pas ici imprudemment le secret des adeptes? Quoi qu'il en soit, on peut dire qu'il s'est admirablement peint lui-même. La colère est comme l'ivresse ; l'homme y paraît au naturel. Le philosophe a donc aussi des momens où il est homme.

"Tu vois Vachine, elle eut l'art de me plaire,
J'ai bien jadis embrassé ma sorcière.
Je la verrais mourante à mes côtés,
* * * * * *
Sur un fumier, rendant son âme au diable,
Que ma vertu paisible, inaltérable,
Me défendrait de m'écarter d'un pas
Pour la sauver des portes du trépas.

D'un vrai Rousseau tel est le caractère ;
Il n'est ami, parent, époux ni père ;
Il est de roche ;[1] et quiconque en un mot,
Naquit sensible, est fait pour être sot."

The extracts given from the *Guerre de Genève* by this contemporary critic do not sufficiently prove Voltaire's endeavour not merely to vilify Jean Jacques personally, but also to paint him as a demagogue and sower of disorder. The story is that Robert Covelle and his mistress, Catherine, whose loves have offended the severe ministers of Geneva, seek out by the advice of the goddess Inconstancy, her favourite, Jean Jacques; and he shows himself entirely ready to return with them and stir up disorder in the virtuous Republic. But when the intending conspirators arrive they find a new atmosphere of pleasure and good humour established, because Geneva in their absence has opened a theatre:

"Tout respirait la paix la plus profonde; au lieu du bruit des foudroyants canons on entendait celui des violons."

Covelle and his sweetheart are rejoiced, but Rousseau, of course, is disgusted. He is welcomed amiably, and told that now that the arts have sweetened people's tempers, they are in no mood to persecute, or to tyrannize over their fellow-men.

"A ce discours enfant de l'alégresse,
Rousseau restait morne, pâle et pensif ;
Son vilain front fut voilé de tristesse.
D'un vieux caissier l'héritier présomptif
N'est pas plus sot alors qu'on lui vient dire
Que le bon homme en réchape et respire.
Rousseau, poussé par son maudit démon,
S'en va trouver le prédicant Brognon.
Dans un réduit à l'écart il le tire.

[1] *Il est de roche*, apparemment parce qu'il n'a pas répondu à de tels aboiemens, et qu'il déclara ne vouloir jamais y répondre. Ainsi, M. de Voltaire a eu pour lui seul la gloire d'avoir voulu et d'avoir pu décocher des injures, qu'on n'a pas voulu repousser, le tout par défaut de bile et d'effronterie.

Grince les dents, se recueille et soupire.
Puis il lui dit, 'vous êtes un fripon ;
Je sens pour vous une haine implacable ;
Vous m'abhorrez ; vous me donnez au diable ;
Mais nos dangers doivent nous réunir.
Tout est perdu ; Genève a du plaisir.
C'est pour nous deux le coup le plus terrible!
Vernet sur-tout y sera bien sensible.
Les charlatans sont donc bernés tout net !
Ce soir Tartuffe, et demain Mahomet !
Après demain l'on nous jouera de même.
Des Genevois on adoucit les mœurs,
On les polit, ils deviendront meilleurs.
On s'aimera. Souffrirons-nous qu'on s'aime ?
Allons brûler le théâtre à l'instant.
Un chevalier ambassadeur de France
Vient d'ériger cet affreux monument,
Séjour de paix, de joie et d'innocence :
Qu'il soit détruit jusqu'en son fondement.
Ayons tous deux la vertu d'Erostrate ;
Ainsi que lui méritons un grand nom.
Vous connaissez la noble ambition.
Le grand vous plaît et la gloire vous flatte :
Prenons ce soir en secret un brandon.
En vain les sots diront que c'est un crime :
Dans ce bas monde il n'est ni bien ni mal.
Aux vrais savans tout doit sembler égal.
Bâtir est beau ; mais détruire est sublime.
Brûlons théâtre, actrice, acteur, souffleur,
Et spectateur, et notre ambassadeur.'

Le lourd Brognon crut entendre un prophète,
Crut contempler l'ange exterminateur,
Qui fait sonner sa fatale trompette
Au dernier jour, au grand jour du Seigneur.

Pour accomplir ce projet de détruire,
Pour réussir, Vachine doit s'armer ;
Sans toi, Bacchus, peut-on chanter et rire ?
Sans toi, Vénus, peut-on savoir aimer ?
Sans toi, Vachine, on n'est pas sûr de nuire."

The method of poisoning and destroying the peace of Geneva employed by "Vachine" (in other words, by poor Thérèse, incapable even of reading the epic poem composed in her dishonour!) cannot be described. Rage and strife are renewed; and the whole city

involved in a war of mutual recriminations, every one accusing every one else of poisoning the air. At length, however, a method of pacification is found. An umpire is chosen, a Madame Oudrille, who stands to represent the goddess of good humour. She advises them to be happy; and rebuild the Theatre. If they occupy themselves with the cultivation of the flowers of art the sweet scent of life will be restored. The counsel is hailed with joy.

"Tout le conseil entendit la leçon.
Le peuple même écouta la raison.
Les jours sereins de Saturne et de Rhée,
Le temps heureux du beau règne d'Astrée
Dès ce moment renaquirent pour eux.
On rappela les danses et les jeux,
Qu'avait bannis Calvin l'impitoyable;
Jeux protégés par un ministre aimable,
Jeux détestés de Vernet l'ennuyeux.
Celle qu'on dit de Jupiter la fille.
Mère d'amour et des plaisirs de paix,
Revint placer son lit à Plainpalais.
Genève fut une grande famille:
Et l'on jura que si quelque brouillon
Mettait jamais le trouble à la maison,
On l'enverrait devers Madame Oudrille.
Le roux Rousseau de fureur hébété,
Avec sa gaupe errant à l'aventure,
S'enfuit de rage, et fit vîte un traité
Contre la paix qu'on venait de conclure."

Enough evidence has now been given to prove that Rousseau was not mad, and did not calumniate Voltaire, when he accused him of being his persecutor:—That is what concerns us in this new criticism of Rousseau. In so far as Voltaire is concerned, his most ardent admirers, (and I count myself amongst them) will admit with sincere affliction that his behaviour to Rousseau is an ugly blot upon his fame. At the same time it has to be recognized that a marked distinction has to be made between Voltaire's conduct in the character of a persecutor of Rousseau and the conduct of the two conspirators who described themselves as the "old friends" of a

man who had trusted them; and whom they betrayed; one who had never injured them; and whom they deliberately calumniated, knowing him to be absolutely innocent of all the charges they brought against him. Voltaire had never lived on terms of friendly intimacy with Rousseau; when he became his enemy, he betrayed no confidence; and was false to no obligations of affection. Nor, from his own point of view, did Voltaire become Rousseau's enemy without good reasons. Upon three separate occasions, Jean Jacques had been the offender: first of all when neglecting Voltaire's request that the poem upon the earthquake of Lisbon might remain unanswered; secondly when opposing Voltaire's desire to see a theatre established at Geneva; thirdly by telling him with unnecessary frankness that his influences corrupted the simple manners of a republic that would perish if it adopted the luxurious and corrupt habits of life prevalent in France.

Finally, Voltaire did not know that the accusations made against Rousseau by men who professed to have lived with him as friends and to have repudiated him on account of his abominable character, were false charges. The patriarch of Fernay probably accepted quite literally the histories related to him by Grimm in 1759, and confirmed by Tronchin: that this professing purist led an immoral life; that he had exposed his children in the open streets; that he had refused to safeguard the mother of his mistress from starvation; that he was an impostor who pretended to earn his bread by a trade he never practised; and an ingrate who lived upon the bounty of his friends, and who repaid their services with calumnies. Believing all these things, Voltaire felt no compunction when attacking a hypocrite, an ingrate and an impostor, who had been personally rude to him, and whom he regarded as a traitor, "un faux frère," on the strength of certain differences between himself and the author of *Emile* in their attitude towards religious questions . . . summing the case up, what has to

be decided is that Voltaire persecuted Rousseau, but that he was no conscious accomplice in any plot against him, and did not believe in the existence of any plot. That he was merciless, unscrupulous and vindictive in his pursuit of Jean Jacques; but that he honestly believed Jean Jacques deserved all that befell him and had provoked the animosity he incurred. In short we have to recognize that it did not belong to this indomitable fighter in an epoch when a liberator of more scrupulous and relentful temper might have left the mind of the epoch in its chains, to forgive a personal insult, or to allow one whom he regarded as a traitor, "un faux frère," to escape the cruel and biting edge of the fatal weapon he wielded so relentlessly, the "sword of the ridicule that kills."

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3rd Calumny—That Rousseau was *an impostor* who accepted privately the benefits he refused in public; and whose pretended trade of copyist was used as a screen for his readiness to take money he had not earned, 129, 130; falseness of this charge, 62, Appendix, Note A A, 313, 314, 356, 357, etc.; ii. 59.

4th Calumny—That Rousseau was *a hypocrite* who, devoured by hunger for notoriety and praise, pretended to love retirement and a country life; and who was so unfit for solitude with nature that he became mad and wicked in his Montmorency Hermitage, 130, 195; ii. 53, 57, 100; falseness of this charge, 130; ii. 110,

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5th Calumny—That Rousseau boasted that he had an ungrateful heart and hated all those who served him, 137; ii. 58, 103; falseness of this charge, Appendix, ii. 257, 258, Note L, 348; ii. 104.

Calumnies against Rousseau in Diderot's *Tablettes*, 134–137; false letter in *Correspondance Littéraire*, 1756, ii. 7; charge of odious selfishness, 26; charge of treachery to Saint-Lambert, 28; of deceit against Diderot, 29; of ferocious wickedness, 47; of calumniating Diderot, 53; in the note added on the *Essay upon Seneca*, 55–60; the campaign of calumny in the *Correspondance Littéraire*. First Act, 95–113; Second Act, 124–153; Third Act, 211–222.

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Chevrette, La, Château de, residence of Madame d'Epinay near Montmorency. Theatricals at; Saint-Marc Girardin accuses Rousseau of false statements in connection with them, 61. Appendix, Note D, 379, 381, shows that Saint-Marc Girardin's preference for the *Memoirs* before the *Confessions* is a blunder.

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Conspiracy against Rousseau: Holbach's admission that there was "*une conspiration amicale*" between himself and Diderot and Grimm against Rousseau, 32; Ginguené's belief in the *conspiracy*, 50; Scherer's contemptuous refusal to permit open expression of any belief in, 65; positive and sensational evidence of the conspiracy and revelation of the actual conspirators supplied by the Arsenal Notes, 80, 88, 89, 91, 92, 118, etc.

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Conti, Prince de, warns Rousseau of sentence of arrest in June 1762, ii. 92, 93; lends Rousseau an apartment in the Temple in 1765, ii. 166, 188, 213.

Copyist, Rousseau adopted the trade of, in 1750, to render himself independent of patronage, and of the pecuniary success of his books, 62, 123, Appendix, Note A A, i. 313, 314; Grimm and Diderot endeavour to make it appear that he only pretends to follow his trade, 129, 130, 196, 262, 265, 267; ii. 62, 63; La Harpe in the *Mercure* endeavoured to convey the impression that it was from miserly or mercenary motives that Rousseau adopted this trade, Note C C, Appendix, 366.

Correspondance Littéraire: Campaign of calumny against Rousseau carried on secretly by Grimm from June 1762 to May 1767, ii. Part v., 91–234; on the 9th June, 1762, Rousseau fled from France to avoid arrest after the decree of the Parliament of Paris against *Emile*; he reached Yverdun

14th June. *See* ii. 95. (*See Corr. Litt.* v. 99.)

June 15, Grimm circulated secretly amongst rulers and influential persons in Europe his "kind of biography," describing Rousseau as a man of base origin, embittered by humiliations, a hater of great people and of all authority, and especially of his native city and republic.

June 18, Council of Geneva condemned *Emile* and sentenced author to arrest, ii. 101 (*Corr. Litt.* v. 11[r])

July 1, Grimm circulates secretly that to defy the Council and to stir up disorder as a leader of a sect of his partisans, he will probably go to Geneva, and that if he does, he will certainly endeavour to cause Voltaire annoyance about his theatre at Les Délices. He accuses the author of *Emile* of borrowing his ideas and spoiling them, and of wishing not to serve the truth but to say the opposite of other people, ii. 102, 103 (*Corr. Litt.*, v. 139).

July 10, Rousseau, expelled by Senate of Berne from Yverdun, takes refuge at Motier, in Prussian territory.

August 1, Grimm takes care to inform his *abonné* Frederic that the fugitive author who claims his protection has spoken ill of him in *Emile*. He wilfully distorts a phrase in *Emile* and makes Rousseau an apologist of fanaticism—"worthy of taking the part of the judges of the unfortunate Calas."

On Sept. 11, in another false criticism of *Emile*, he affirms that Rousseau justifies ingratitude and probably has his own reasons for doing so, ii. 103 (*Corr. Litt.*, v. 151).

On Aug. 25, 1762, the Archbishop of Paris issued his Mandate against *Emile*, ii. 114, 124 (*Corr. Litt.*, v. 162).

On Sept. 15 Grimm proclaims the great success obtained by the portrait given in this Mandate of Jean Jacques as a hypocrite, a sophist, always in contradiction with himself.

In March 1763 appears Rousseau's reply to Mandate, "Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont." It was condemned at Geneva as well as in Paris, and Rousseau, on May 12, resigned his title of Citizen of Geneva.

May 13, 1763, Grimm circulates false report that in the Letter to Christopher de Beaumont Rousseau justifies the persecution of the Protestants in France and lends cruel arms to fanaticism (this to stir up ill-will of Genevese ministers and Protestants generally), ii. 126–132 (*Corr. Litt.*, v. 381).

In December 1763, Procureur-général Tronchin justified in his *Lettres de la Campagne* the refusal of the Council to allow the revision of the sentence against Rousseau, ii. 133 (*Corr. Litt.*, v. 413).

Dec. 15, 1763, Editor forgets his horror of intolerance, and justifies this defender of the persecution of a writer for his opinions by the Council of Geneva, the Parliament of Paris, and the Senate of Berne.

In September 1764, Butta-foco, Corsican patriotic leader, wrote to ask author of *Contrat Social* to assist them in drawing up a constitution for their country, ii. 133 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 113).

In Nov. 1764, Grimm, to lessen honour done to Rousseau, circulates the false statement that the same request has been made to Diderot and Helvetius.

On Jan. 15, 1765, he finds it "amusing" that a man banished from, and kindling civil war in, his own country, should be invited to frame a constitution for another; but he adds (it passes for certain) that the letter Rousseau received was not from the Corsican leader, but from a practical joker, ii. 144 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 132).

In November 1764 appeared Rousseau's *Letters from the Mountain*, his answer to the *Letters from the Country;* the book was sentenced at once to be burnt at Geneva, Paris, and the Hague, ii. 135–139 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 176).

In January 1765 Grimm secretly denounced the author of the destroyed book as a blasphemer who outraged decency as well as the Christian religion by describing the founder of Christianity as a *bon viveur* and man of pleasure; and a fomenter of civil war, guilty of high

treason, inasmuch as he tried to destroy the constitution of his country and to arm fellow citizens against each other and stain the streets of Geneva with blood.

Sept. 10, 1765, Rousseau, after being stoned as a "blasphemer" and "fomenter of civil war," at Motiers, takes refuge in Island of St. Pierre, ii. 151 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 384).

October 1, Grimm relates that Jean Jacques' "good friend," the Pastor Montmollin, who had admitted him to the Holy Table two years earlier, "has just had him kicked out of Motiers by his parishioners."

October 17, Rousseau is expelled by the Senate of Berne from Island of St. Pierre; his request to be left in peace there as a prisoner until spring is refused. Three days later he is expelled from Bienne. October 28 he starts with intention of accepting Frederic's offer of a retreat near Berlin: reaches Strasburg Nov. 4, ill and unfit to continue journey (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 405).

Nov. 15, Grimm informs his *abonnés*, Rousseau imagined or invented story of the "lapidation" of Motiers. A few pebbles were thrown at his window by a tipsy reveller. About Pastor Montmollin, he reminds his readers that Rousseau had once praised his charity. He says: "This poor Jean Jacques should really give up bestowing praises; up to now, it has always happened that after a lapse of time he has to revoke his first approval! It is a grave misfortune to spend one's life in making mistakes about the people one lives with," ii. 152 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 479).

Nov. 5—Dec. 4, at Strasburg, Rousseau receives from all classes proofs of sympathy and enthusiasm. As a result of cold and over-fatigue, he falls ill and renounces long journey to Berlin. He decides to return to Paris and meet David Hume there, who offers him retreat in England.

Dec. 1, Grimm entertains his *abonnés* with a comic journal of hourly, as well as daily, words and gestures of Jean Jacques; compiled to throw ridicule upon his sympathizers and admirers, as well as upon himself, ii. 158 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 433).

Dec. 16, Rousseau reaches Paris and stays there until Jan. 2. The Prince de Conti has prepared him an apartment at the Temple. To avoid irritating magistrates or provoking demonstrations Rousseau goes—nowhere; but he is overwhelmed and over-fatigued by visits of enthusiasts and curious strangers as well as of friends, so that he implores Hume to hasten their departure, ii. 167 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 459).

January 1st, 1766, Grimm tells his *abonnés* that Rousseau has promenaded the streets of Paris in his Armenian costume to attract attention. That he has held his court daily in the Temple, where the Prince de Conti had given him a refuge. And that this "affectation of showing himself in defiance of the sentence of arrest out against him" has provoked the ministers, who had granted him permission to pass through France; so that he has been warned by the police to start at once. In the same issue of the *Correspondance Littéraire*, Grimm circulates the *False Letters of the King of Prussia*, stating that M. Walpole is the author of this "pleasantry," ii. 214 (*Corr. Litt.*, vi. 457).

April 7, Rousseau wrote to the London newspaper which had published the *Letter of the King of Prussia* as a genuine document, denouncing it as a forgery.

April 15, Grimm informed his *abonnés* Jean Jacques was causing trouble in England, and that the fuss he was making about Mr. Walpole's simple joke at his expense might have plunged two countries in war if Frederic had been as ill-natured as Jean Jacques, ii. 183 (*Corr. Litt.*, vii. 11).

Early in October appeared the *Exposé Succinct*, the French translations by Suard and d'Alembert of David Hume's account of his quarrel with Rousseau.

On October 15 the editor of the *Correspondance Littéraire* profited by the admirable opportunity of this new quarrel to reproduce his own improved account of Jean

Jacques' earlier quarrel with his "old friends" and benefactors. He now feels it safe to alter his statement made in 1762 that Rousseau forsook his old friends to take up with great people—he acknowledges that it was he who repudiated Jean Jacques, ii. 221 (*Corr. Litt.*, vii. 137).

Criticism of Rousseau, a new criticism by exact historical methods is required, because the psychological method starts with wrong assumptions and reaches false conclusions, 4; the starting point of this criticism is to prove that the doctrine of Rousseau's detestable character is not an established fact, 6, 7, 11, 15, 19, 34, etc.; that it has for its foundations an historical fraud, 5; the rule of this is to discard arguments and examine facts in the light of evidence, 5; the results obtained by, are documentary proof of a conspiracy against Rousseau, 119, etc; and that this conspiracy had for its instruments the documents accepted by critics as their authority for the doctrine of his abominable character, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57–67; the purposes of this criticism are to examine the true facts of Rousseau's character and conduct in the epoch when his great works were produced, 80, 81, etc.; the scope of it is to establish the personality of the Prophet and Teacher whose philosophy of Life is handed down in the *Discourses*, the *Social Contract*, the *New Héloïse*, *Emile*, and the *Letters from the Mountain*, ii. 153, 186, 236, 238; the personality of the author of the *Confessions*, of the *Dialogues* and of the *Reveries* is only dealt with in so far as it is necessary to prove that, although Rousseau's heart was broken and his faith in his power to serve mankind quenched, he continued through the last ten years of his life undegraded and in his right mind, ii. 239, 244, 248

Criticism, psychological, of Rousseau, the reason and authority for a—is the assumption that the doctrine of his atrocious private character is an established historical fact, 2, 34, 67; that the problem of his genius and his repulsive personality can only be solved by psychologists, 3; and by the rule of seeing in his soul and in his writings two opposite things at the same time, 3, 304; the results obtained by this psychological criticism leave Rousseau, his books, and his influences unintelligible. *See* Note A, 301, 302, 303.

Deleyre, an "old friend" of Rousseau's, who knew all the circumstances of his rupture with the Encylopædists and condemned them, 14, 74; ii. 24.

Desbarres, pseudonym given Duclos in Madame d'Epinay's posthumous book, 90; ii. 13, 74; Appendix *Arsenal Notes*, Note D D, 381–393.

Devin du Village, Rousseau's opera, the fame it brought him, and especially his refusal to secure the pension Louis XV. offered him, was his first unpardonable offence with Diderot, 146; Appendix, Note B, 346, 347; ii. 8, 13, 18.

Diderot, with Grimm chief conspirator against Rousseau, 1, 15, 30, 31, 74; "old friend" in what sense, 13, 14, 31, 32, 73; his prophecy in *Essay upon Seneca* of the *Memoirs*, 74; his handwriting in the *Arsenal Notes* proves him the falsifier who, with Grimm, dictated the changes made by Madame d'Epinay in her novel, 92 (facsimile 8). Describes Rousseau as sophist, 129, 131; as corrupted by his habitation of woods, 130; Les sept scélératesses de J. J. Rousseau, 134–137;—never accused Rousseau of abandoning his children, 150; quarrel with Rousseau, after the publication of *Le fils naturel*, 237, ii. 14, 15, 19, 20, 22; his interference, and insistence upon Rousseau's accompanying Madame d'Epinay to Geneva, 227; ii. 3; his treachery towards Rousseau, ii. 3, 46; his grievances against Rousseau reach their head in June 1756. From this date Diderot becomes Grimm's accomplice, 5; his "little masterpiece," ii. 7–13; proof in the *Arsenal MS.* that this letter was intended to injure Rousseau, 13 (*see* Appendix, Note F, ii. 249, 250, 252); the occasion chosen by, for accusing Rousseau of odious selfishness and for the supposed prophetic speech by his wife, ii. 23, 24, 25, 26; his supposed advice to Rousseau to confess his passion for Madame

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Dijon. Rousseau's discourse crowned by Academy of Dijon, Diderot's libel about: inserted in the *Memoirs;* in his *Tablettes;* and reported by Marmontel and La Harpe. *See* Appendix, Note B, 343, 344, 345.

Dorat, a sincere admirer of Rousseau's and a well-informed contemporary critic, 14; his criticism of the *Confessions* in 1770, 26–28; his protest against the *Essay upon Seneca*, Appendix, Note B, 348; Voltaire writes to, against Rousseau, Appendix, ii. Note L, 375.

Duclos, a friend of Rousseau's, attacked even more savagely than he is in the *Memoirs* under the name of Desbarres, 55, 137; Appendix, Note D D, 381–384.

Dupeyrou, attached himself to Rousseau in the time when he was an exile at Motiers and remained faithful to him to the end of his life, and defended his memory, 14; Appendix, A A, 309, 310, 311; Note B, 352–356; ii. 154, 223.

Dupin, Madame, her true relationships with Rousseau, 127, 143, 153; ii. 107, 108; Grimm's falsehoods about the humiliations Rousseau endured at her hands, 128, 129; ii. 108, 109; La Harpe repeats them, Appendix, Note B, 345.

Encyclopædists: Diderot and d'Alembert, as editors of the *Encyclopædia*, were employers and leaders of opinions amongst men of letters, who took up the quarrels and antipathies of their chiefs, 16; the house of the Baron d'Holbach was their meeting-place, 31.

Enfants Trouvés: methods in use in the period when Rousseau is supposed to have sent his children there, did not necessitate exposure of infants to any risk, 148, 156, 157; great care taken to preserve every token left with infant that could serve to identify it if reclaimed proved by registers, 162; the plan followed, 163, reasons for this exactitude. *See* Note E, Appendix, 415–418 for an entry in the Registers which did not correspond with Rousseau's description, but which may lead to mischievous assumptions.

Enville, Duchesse d', a friend of Voltaire's. Her name appears on the list of Grimm's *abonnés* as responsible for 1,200 numbers of the *Correspondance Littéraire* between the years 1763 and 1766. There were twenty-four numbers of this secret journal issued each year, so that the Duchesse d'Enville evidently supplied other *abonnés* who preferred to give no name, 40, 41.

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in making confidences to Grimm, who betrays them to Saint-Lambert, 248, 259 ; her portrait of Madame d'Houdetot proves her real sentiments towards Madame H., and that she did surprise her sister-in-law's letters to Rousseau, 254 ; quarrel patched up between Rousseau and Diderot by Madame d'Epinay, 236 ; her unsuccessful attempt to win over Grimm to live in peace with Rousseau, 269 ; the journey to Geneva, and Diderot's interference with advice to Rousseau to accompany his benefactress correctly told in *Confessions*, 280 ; Madame d'Houdetot persuaded Rousseau to submit the case to Grimm, 281, 282 ; Rousseau's Letter to Grimm, 283, 289 ; Grimm profits by imprudence, and compels Madame d'Épinay to break with Rousseau, 295 ; Rousseau committed no crime against Madame d'Epinay, and she sinned against him only under the orders of Grimm, 298.

Fel, Mademoiselle, opera singer: Grimm's violent passion for her, in 1753, gave him the reputation amongst women of the world as a romantic personage. The date throws doubt on the story of his duel in defence of Madame d'Epinay in this epoch, ii. 75.

Formeuse, de, pseudonym given de Francueil in Madame d'Epinay's novel, 381.

Francueil, M. de, stepson of Madame Dupin and first lover of Madame d'Épinay, 205, 206, 213, 214. Treats Rousseau as confidential friend, introduces him to Madame d'Epinay, 202, 203, 205, 213 ; ii. 107.

Francueil, Madame de, Rousseau's friendship with, 203 ; Rousseau's letter to, about the manner of leaving children at the Enfants Trouvés ; he recognizes that he has sent his children there but denies that he has, or ever would have, consented to their exposure, 152 ; this letter, April 20, 1751, may be compared with his denial in 1765 that he had exposed his children, ii. 121 ; died in 1754 whilst Rousseau was at Geneva. In the *Memoirs* it is alleged that her death took place shortly before Madame de Julli's, who died in 1752, ii. 71; Appendix, Note D D, 391.

Garnier: pseudonym for Diderot in Madame d'Epinay's posthumous book, 85, 93, 98, 117, 230, 241, 274, 275, 276, 278 ; ii. 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 51, 52 ; Appendix, Note D, 392, 393, 394, 405, 411 ; Appendix, ii. Note F, 249, 250, 251.

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Ginguené's *Lettres sur Les Confessions*, justifies all the charges brought by Rousseau, and challenges Grimm, still living, to answer, 30.

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Mercure de France. The libels against Rousseau by La Harpe, published in the *Mercure*, were reprinted by A. A. Barbier in 1818, and published under the title of *Nouveau Supplément au Cours de Littérature de La Harpe*, 49.

Mirabeau, Gabriel Honoré, his judgment upon Rousseau, 19; and upon the *Confessions*, *idem*.

Morley, John, Mr., best known English biographer of Rousseau, 4; text of his study in a verse which indicates the assumption of a double-natured Rousseau, 3; his assumption that such distinguished literary critics as Sainte-Beuve and Saint-Marc Girardin are "the most sane and rational judges of Rousseau, 5; a second assumption is that Rousseau's repulsive personality is an established fact, disputed only by "fanatics," 6; a third, that between contradictory reports "the facts of Rousseau's conduct have become ghostly to us, a puzzle that cannot now be found out and that is not worth finding out," 255; a fourth is that an exceptional method of criticism is required to help us to solve the problem of Rousseau's repulsive personality and vile outer life, and his genius and spiritual influences, 3; but if Rousseau's personality were *not* repulsive, and if his outer life were *not* vile, the problem does not exist; and a psychological attempt to solve it will not give satisfactory results; and the results obtained by Mr. Morley's criticism leave Rousseau incomprehensible, Appendix, Note A, 301, 302, 303, 304, etc.; Mr. Morley adopts from Sainte-Beuve (who adopts from the *Memoirs*) the mythical Grimm: "coldly upright, and above all things hating declamation," formed from the model of Volx, 66; ii. 78, 81; adopts the story given in the *Memoirs* of the offer of the Hermitage to Rousseau as more credible than the story told in the *Confessions*, 180; adopts as genuine René's bizarre theories upon education, which do not enlighten but bewilder and distress the good mother, Madame de Montbrillant, 225; describes Grimm's second answer to Rousseau's letter about the journey to Geneva as a "flash of manly anger," 202; considers "it would be ridiculous for us to waste time in discussing Jean Jacques' charges against Hume: that they are not open to serious examination," ii. 170; decides that "the *Dialogues* cannot have been written by a man who was in his right mind," ii. 170; affirms that "a suspicion has haunted the world ever since Rousseau's death that he destroyed himself by a pistol shot," ii. 246; Appendix, Note B, 342; concludes about the last scene of Rousseau's life: "no tragedy ever had a fifth act more squalid," ii. 246, 342.

Musset Pathay, author of the most conscientious and valuable biography of Rousseau, based on careful study of documents accessible to a researcher in 1827, 340; criticism of the *Memoirs* in his *Anecdotes Inédites*, 74, 75; in his *Life of Rousseau*, Musset Pathay denies again the claims made by the editors of Madame d'Epinay's work to historical value, 77; adopts the theory that Rousseau committed suicide; and is answered by Stanislas de Girardin, Appendix, Note B, 340, 341; was the first to publish the fictitious *Lettre à Sophie*, ii. Appendix, Note H, 280.

Mythical "Jean Jacques." The plan followed by Grimm and Diderot was to endow the "Jean Jacques" of their portrait with the exactly opposite tastes and characteristics to those

manifested in Rousseau's writings. We have here the origins of the theory that there were two men in Rousseau, 123.

Plot against Rousseau to create for him an entirely false reputation; assumption by modern critics that the notion of the existence of such a plot is too absurdly extravagant to deserve attention, 1, 33, 50, 65, 67, etc; the study of the MSS. and the history of the origin and preservation of Madame d'Epinay's *Memoirs* proves the existence of this plot, 119; so does an attentive study of the *Correspondance Littéraire*, 41, 42; ii. 91. Rousseau neither exaggerated the malice of his enemies nor misunderstood their designs; but the instruments of the plot remained hidden from him, ii. 234.

Poirier, Dom, personage chosen by Committee of Public Instruction to report upon Grimm's papers, who must have handled the MS. of *Memoirs* and classified it as "les paperasses n'ayant aucune importance," 97, 98.

Quérard, *La France Littéraire*. Notice condemning Sevelinges' article *Rousseau* in the *Biographie Universelle*, and describing it as "an infamous libel," 47.

Rousseau, J. J., and his children, The legend of. Two questions are involved: (1) the question of facts, (2) the question of Rousseau's moral responsibility, 144, 148; what is the fact that appears confirmed by evidence when we inquire into the existence of these supposed children? All the evidence we have is given in *Confessions*, 146; Rousseau says he never saw any of his children, 156, 160; Thérèse told him of the coming event, and she went into retirement until all was over, 158; arrangements for depositing her children at Enfants Trouvés were left to herself, the midwife and Madame Levasseur, 159; these five children must have been born between 1746 and 1754, when there were no spectators of the circumstances of Rousseau's life with Thérèse; after Madame d'Epinay and Madame de Luxembourg became attentive witnesses, no children arrived; Rousseau prepared a token to be placed in the first child's clothing in 1746, 159; in 1761 La Roche is given the duplicate of this token and examines the registers of the Enfants Trouvés, and no entry recording the reception of an infant signalized by any such token can be found, ii. 163, 164; the registers were kept with extraordinary exactitude, 161, 162; Diderot, in his *Tablettes* and in his *Essay upon Seneca*, does not mention Rousseau's abandonment of his children, nor is it mentioned in the *Correspondance Littéraire*, nor in the *Memoirs*, 164, 165, 166, 167, etc.; Grimm and Diderot paid a pension to Madame Levasseur, 168; d'Holbach admitted that there was a plot connected with Thérèse, 32. Conclusion—that Rousseau's enemies, who invented false charges, and aggravated his slightest fault, did not dare accuse him of abandoning his children, lest their share in the conspiracy with Thérèse and Madame Levasseur might be disclosed, 169; the probable motive of conspirators: to compel Rousseau to accept pensions and patronage like other men of letters, for the sake of Thérèse, 169; the probable motive of Thérèse: to bind Rousseau to her by his belief in her sacrifices for his sake, 179. 2. Rousseau's moral responsibility. He was *not* guilty in fact or in intention of exposing, or consenting to the exposure, of newly-born infants, 148, 157; his letter to Mdme. de Francueil, in 1751, proves he did not quibble over words in 1765, when distinguishing between the exposure of children and the depositing of them at the Enfants Trouvés, 148; he was *not* guilty of "ferocious cruelty," nor of tyranny, nor of neglectful heartlessness towards the woman he regarded as his wife and the mother of his children, 173, 174; he did not repudiate his children from self-indulgence and to lead an easy life, but to secure them against destitution and to remain faithful to his vow of independent poverty, 152, 153; in 1746 and 1753 he advocated the doctrine set forth in his *Essay on Political Economy* that the education of all children by the State is the

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Staël, Madame de, criticism of Rousseau and his *Confessions*, 19, 20, 21.

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Thérèse Levasseur: Lamartine's account of Rousseau's behaviour to Thérèse, 151; this account is false *in every particular:* Rousseau did not seduce Thérèse, 173; he did not abandon her when his caprice was over to the risks of indigence, 173; he did not tear her babes from her arms, and deprive these infants of every token that might serve to identify them, 157; his union of thirty-five years from its commencement (in 1745) to Rousseau's death (in 1778) was virtually a marriage from the first; and the form of a legal marriage Rousseau went through with Thérèse, in 1769, was to secure her rights as his widow in the sale of his works, 174; Rousseau's care of Thérèse's material interests, his acceptance of a pension for her, etc., 155; ii. 181; Appendix, Note B, 357; his belief in her simplicity and candour a mistake, 175; but Thérèse was not entirely mercenary in her attachment to Rousseau: she nursed him in his illnesses with devotion, and cared for his physical comfort and, in her own way, loved him, 177, 288; she would not have abandoned her children, and had no motive for doing so, whilst if she had no children she had strong motives for pretending that she had sacrificed herself for Rousseau's sake, 178, 179; Voltaire's attack upon Thérèse was unwarranted and inexcusable, ii. Appendix, Note L, 377, 378, 380.

Tourneux, Maurice M., editor of Diderot's works and of Grimm's *Correspondance Littéraire*, 38; gives

in vol. xvi. of *Correspondance Littéraire* the history of Grimm's books and papers after the confiscation of his belongings as an emigrant, 97; the original discoverer of the Arsenal MS. amongst Diderot's papers preserved in this library, 58; printed for the first time from Diderot's *Tablettes*, *Les sept scélératesses de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, 133.

Tronchin, Doctor: historical facts of the relationships between Rousseau and the Doctor Tronchin prove that Tronchin was Rousseau's calumniator and persecutor, ii. Appendix, Note I, 285–314. Tronchin sought out Rousseau in 1754, with a very complimentary letter and offer of services, ii. 289. Rousseau courteously declined the services and responded to the friendly advances of Tronchin, 288. In March 1759 Rousseau wrote to Tronchin asking for medical advice for a friend at Montmorency. Tronchin answers and without excuse or reason calls Rousseau to account as a misanthrope embittered by his habitation of woods, 294. Rousseau replies courteously, but with dignity, asking for Tronchin's reason for regarding him as an enemy of mankind. Tronchin replies and gives as his reason Rousseau's Note added on to his *Lettre à d'Alembert*, 295, 296. Rousseau replies with perfect justice and good temper that Tronchin should not base on the regret he expresses for the loss of a friend the conclusion that he has become a hater of mankind. He very rightly claims that he is himself the judge in a case where he knows the circumstances, which Tronchin does not know. Tronchin had concluded that Rousseau was embittered by his surroundings at Montmorency: Rousseau says that, judging from the tone of Tronchin's letter, the sentiments he would find at Geneva would affect him more painfully than his solitude at Montmorency. Tronchin replies with simulated surprise that his sentiments towards Rousseau are full of friendship, that he does not pay compliments, and that Rousseau is evidently embittered, 300, 301, 302. Rousseau replies good-naturedly by begging Tronchin to let them drop this discussion, and remain satisfied with the fact that even if they differ in words they esteem each other. Tronchin replies by a most offensive lamentation upon Rousseau's injustice and by pious adjurations to him to be humble and recognize that only those men are worthy of respect who recognize their own abjectness and the greatness of God. Rousseau does not answer this effusion, 305. Tronchin denounces *Emile*, supports the Council in sentence of arrest against Rousseau, preaches against him in the Cathedral, and describes him as "un miserable" and a sower of poisonous doctrines, 306, 307. Hearing that the young pastor Moultou defends Rousseau, Tronchin lets the young minister, who is at the mercy of the consistory, know that if he is wise he will hold his tongue, ii. 307. It is Tronchin who circulates the falsehood which Grimm spreads through Europe that Rousseau has written two letters, one preaching peace and the other revolt, ii. 308. *See* also Appendix, Note J, 314; writes to Madame Necker that Rousseau is an "incendiary," that he is like Milton's devils who, banished from heaven, curse the gods, "only he is a more devilish devil than any of them," ii. 309; describes Rousseau as a "scoundrel," a "wretch," "the object of public hatred and scorn"; a "monster," etc., ii. 310, 311, 312. Rousseau has been severely blamed for calling Tronchin "le jongleur" (the conjuror) and for having described him as his enemy and persecutor, 314.

Verdelin, Madame de, a devoted and faithful friend of Rousseau's, ii. 154, 156, 159, 160, 161, 163, 175, 227, 230.

Verdict of contemporaries passed upon Rousseau, 11; Note A A, 304–320.

Voltaire, Rousseau's persecutor and calumniator, but not a conspirator against him like Grimm and Diderot, ii. Note L, 334–383.

Ximénes, the Marquis, lends his name to Voltaire's *Lettres sur la Nouvelle Héloïse*, ii. 351, 360.

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